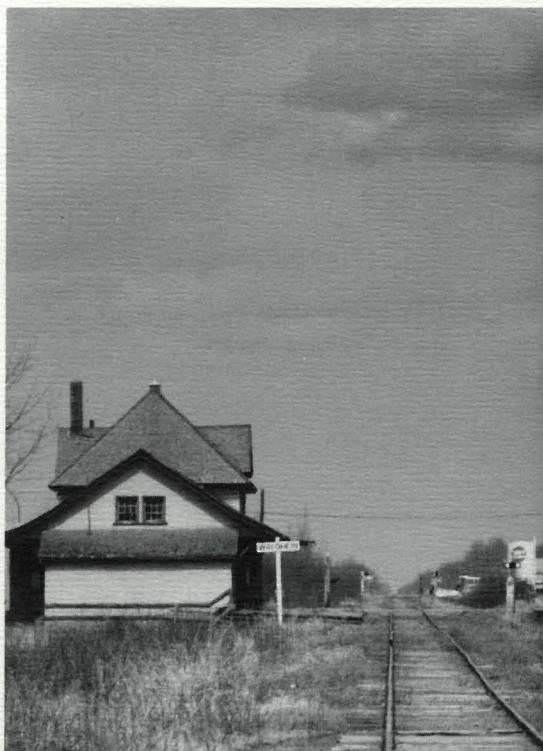


Mennonite Brethren

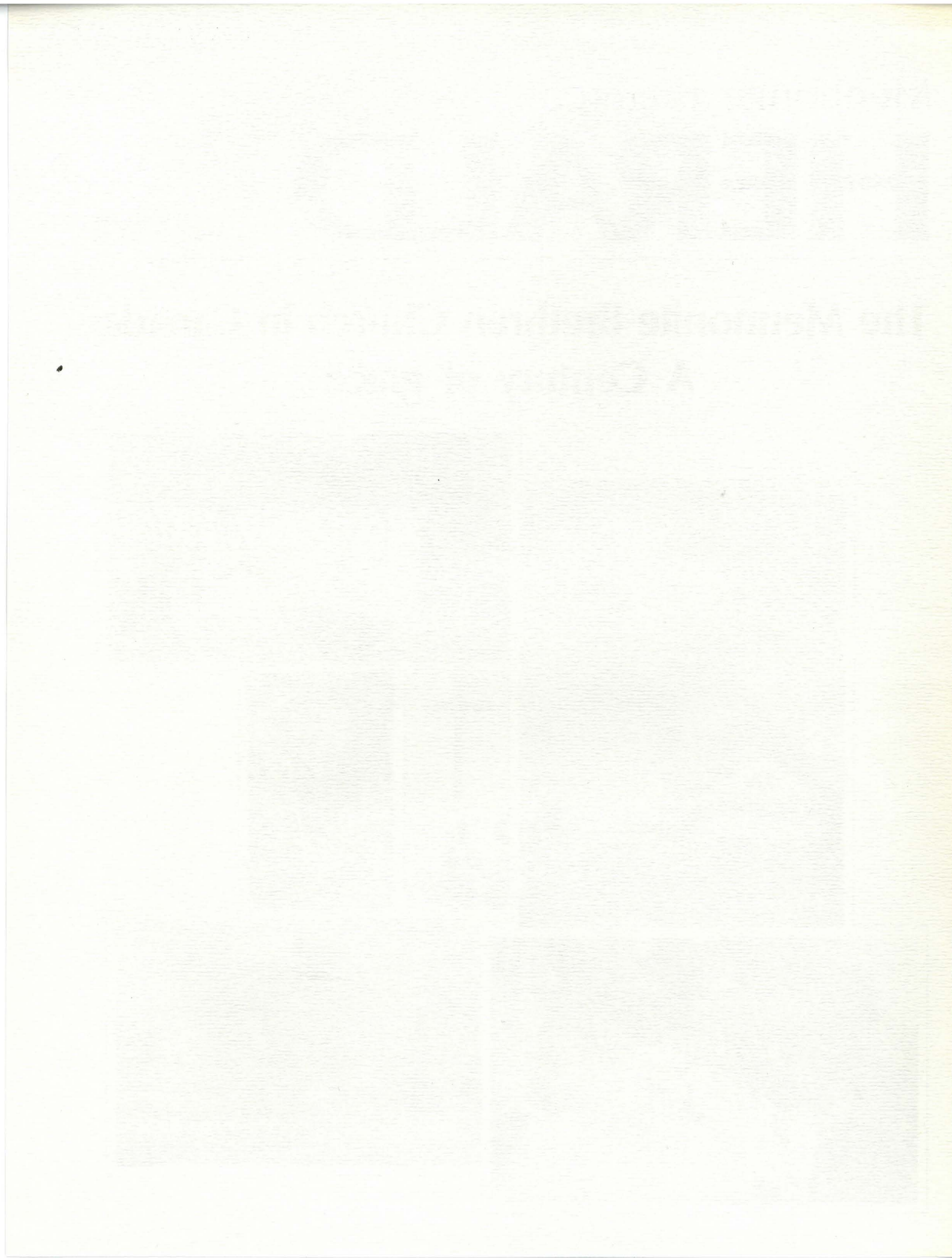
# HERALD

May 27, 1988  
Vol. 27, No. 11

## The Mennonite Brethren Church in Canada: A Century of grace







## A word from the editor

Many years ago, as a teenager in Vancouver, my parents came home from church with book entitled *The Mennonite Brethren Churches of North America: An Illustrated Survey*, by Henry J. Wiens, the field secretary of the General conference Board of Trustees (1947-1952).

For a long time the book sat on a shelf gathering dust. Then I rediscovered it in the mid '60s and read it from cover to cover. The impact of the book was both immediate and long-term. In this one reading, I discovered not only my own roots, but also gained a deep appreciation for the grace of God, which was so evident in the history of our churches.

When the question of what the *Mennonite Brethren Herald* planned to do in terms of special centennial issue, the dream to tell the story of each MB church in Canada was uppermost in my mind.

As is with all dreams, the implementation of the dream is always more difficult than one can imagine. Problems of all kinds surfaced. The main problem was the space factor.

When all the material was gathered and the layout of the issue was planned, a 100-page MBH was projected. Obviously, this was too large and had to be trimmed in size. So, a 72-page issue was contracted.

This brought on the problem to make the copy fit the amount of space available (eight centimetres of copy per church). This required such tight editing—so tight, in fact, that the centre, the heart of the story, seemed frequently to get lost.

We, at MBH, know that the church is

people and not buildings. The building is merely the place where the church meets for fellowship, nurture and worship. The problem for us was complex: how do we symbolize and illustrate the story of the church with pictures? To photograph each congregation of members was an impossibility. To photograph only the leaders of churches would give an unbalanced story. After much discussion, we decided to photograph every congregational meetingplace, to give a concrete visual image to each congregation. After all, the shape and character of a church building says much about who we are and the values we hold. If a congregation currently meets in a rented facility or school, we decided not to illustrate it.

Our material came from many sources, but primarily from the histories written by the churches themselves. In a few cases, even after writing letters and calling by telephone, churches did not respond (which, of course, is their right), and so these churches do not have their story told in this centennial issue. The history of the very recently-chartered churches are sketchy and much more incomplete than we would wish them to be.

Above all, after reading these histories we salute the Centennial Commission on the choice of a very appropriate theme *A Century of Grace and Growth*. The large majority of MB churches were born under very fragile and frequently insecure settings. Many congregations have struggled long and hard to become self-sufficient and self-sustaining. Each story is a commentary on the grace of God.

To bring the people of the MB church to life, we have also included the life stories of six persons, two women and four men. Our thanks to the Centennial Commission for giving us these stories. We have included, as well, a brief history of each provincial conference, in popular style, for the benefit of those readers who are new to our church and are not familiar with the story.

No project so large can be accomplished without the help of many people. I salute, first and foremost, three fine working colleagues, Jim Coggins, Joan Baker and Betty Wiebe, who covered for me repeatedly as I made forays into the far-flung parts of Canada. A special word of thanks to Paul Krahn, who worked conscientiously and often alone, into the late evening hours, to give shape to this material. Ken Reddig, Canadian conference archivist, was also very helpful.

It is our wish that as you read through this centennial issue, you will gain an increased appreciation for the grace of God so evident in our history. It has, indeed, been a century of grace and growth.

Herb Kopp  
editor

Vol. 27, No. 11

THE MENNONITE BRETHREN HERALD is a church paper of the Mennonite Brethren churches of Canada. It seeks to open windows to a larger understanding of Christian truth and to stimulate the church to growth and action. Articles, art and poetry are welcomed, though responsibility to return is not assumed unless specifically requested. All correspondence should be addressed to the Editor Herb Kopp, The Mennonite Brethren Herald, 3-169 Riverton Ave., Winnipeg, Manitoba R2L 2E5. Telephone (204) 669-6575. Change of address notices should include both the old and new address. Allow three weeks for the changes to become effective. Subscription rates \$18 for one year, \$33 for two years, \$49 for three. Second class mailing registration number: 1103. International Standard Serial Number (ISSN) 0025-9349. The Mennonite Brethren Herald is a fortnightly publication, issued on alternating Fridays, printed at Christian Press, Winnipeg, Manitoba.

# ALBERTA: from rural beginnings to urban setting

Alberta—the very word brings all kinds of images to mind. It is a province without sales tax, two large modern cities, dressed in steel, concrete and glass, dry farmland, deeply-eroded badlands, modern four-lane highways, endless oil and the glorious Rocky Mountains.

The appearance of wealth and signs of the good-life seem present everywhere. In Calgary the “yearly insanity”—the Stampede—as one writer in a weekly new magazine calls it, gives the impression that good times are central to understanding the city. The Klondike Days in Edmonton give the same impression.

But things were not always seen in this way. When the Russian Mennonite Brethren arrived in Canada in the mid 1920s, they did not settle where earlier Mennonites had put down roots. Nor did they arrive to a very hospitable landscape. They arrived in southern Alberta where they were directed to rich but unbroken land, by the Canadian Pacific Railway Company, who wanted their vast tracts of unbroken “irrigation lands” farmed. The MBs settled into four communities:

Coaldale, which was to become the largest settlement; Gem, approximately 120 kms northeast of Coaldale; Rosemary, 70 kms south of Gem; and Vauxhall, approximately 50 kms northeast of Coaldale.

The work was back-breaking. But in return, slowly at first and then increasingly, financial stability came again to the Mennonite Brethren people.

With the continued influx of Russian Mennonite people in the mid 1920s (20,000 Mennonites in all came to Canada in this wave of immigration), churches were formed at La Glace, Tofield, Linden, Pincher Creek and Namaka.

But it was the MB church at Coaldale that grew in leaps and bounds. One church building addition was scarcely finished when another was begun. From a small beginning in 1927 the church grew to a membership of over 600 in 1955.

For many years the Coaldale congregation gave leadership to the Alberta conference. In fact, “for more than three decades (from 1927 to 1957) this congregation overshadowed all other churches



**A baptismal scene just behind the Coaldale church.**

in the province since somewhat more than half of all the conference members belonged to the Coaldale MB Church” (J.A. Toews, p.165).

But the process of urbanization, a Canada-wide phenomenon in the 1950s, affected the Alberta MBs as well. In 1956, a city missionary, Jacob F. Froese, was placed into Calgary. Soon a church was organized and chartered. A few years later, a city-mission work paved the way for the Lendrum MB Church to appear.

Further churches appeared in Lethbridge and Medicine Hat. In fact, in a 12 year period “a strong witness in four major cities of the province” (J.A. Toews, p.167) had been established.

Today, of the 21 churches and 2,310 MB members in the Alberta provincial conference, half the churches (10 churches) and half of the membership (1,170) live in urban centres.



**An early undated conference scene**

## **1927 First Mennonite Brethren congregation at Coaldale**

|             |                      |
|-------------|----------------------|
| <b>1945</b> | <b>896 members</b>   |
| <b>1967</b> | <b>1,313 members</b> |
| <b>1987</b> | <b>2,310 members</b> |



# Nettie Berg: a dedicated life of service

Dedication—What is it? Those who have known Nettie Berg know that for her it means being wholly committed to serving the Lord in whatever way she can.

It all began in the village of Fuerstenwerder, Ukraine, when Nettie was born to Peter and Aganeta Berg in 1923. In her first year of life Nettie encountered hardship in the form of illness. Her parents dedicated her well-being to the Lord and, graciously, she recovered.

In 1925 the family came to Canada where they lived in various places in Alberta until finally settling in Saskatchewan on a farm near Dalmeny.

Early in life she became interested in two things: nursing and missions. The first, nursing, was awakened when her mother would take her along to visit the sick. The second, missions, was sparked by her Sunday school teachers and visiting missionaries.

In 1936 the family moved to Coaldale where she committed her life to the Lord. The next year she was baptized and became a member of the Coaldale church.



Nettie Berg with some African friends during medical work assignment in Zaire

Her interest in nursing became a reality when she took her training in the Galt School of Nursing and then worked in Coaldale Hospital for one and a half years.

After this time she went to MBBC where A.H. Unruh and H.H. Janzen were instrumental in guiding her into foreign missions. This decision was not made without struggle since completing nurse's training plans, which had been made earlier, did not include missions. But at MBBC she was able to surrender her whole life to the Lord and inner peace was restored. Her application to the Board of Missions and Services was accepted and in 1952 she left for Zaire (then known as the Belgian Congo).

During the first nine years she was in medical work, which she enjoyed very much, especially the maternity work at "bush" stations. She found great joy in delivering children and helping to save the lives of mothers in difficult circumstances.

However, there arose a need for someone to manage the bookstore in Kikwit. Reluctantly Nettie gave up medical work to take on this new challenge. And in time this work also brought her much joy, especially when she was able to witness the results of Christian literature.

During the rebellion in the Congo, all the missionaries were evacuated to Kinshasha and Nettie was among them. In Kinshasha she introduced a Bible correspondence work which became preparation for her future ministry, the Mailbox Bible Club.

For a short while she returned to Canada to be with her dying mother. She then returned to Zaire and continued her work. During November of 1970 she suddenly lost sight in her right eye. It was diagnosed as a detached retina. Since there were not the proper facilities in Zaire, the operation would have to take place in Canada.

Nettie returned, to Saskatoon, and the operation was performed. She had faith

that the Lord would restore her sight so that she might serve him again, and indeed he did. A new avenue of service opened, the Mailbox Bible Club.

For 17 years her eyesight has remained strong as she has faithfully written and corrected lessons for Mailbox Bible Club students. She wrote lessons at five levels for students ranging in age from four through 17 years. These were fruitful years as children responded to the Holy Spirit through the Bible lessons.

In 1987 she retired from the Mailbox Bible Club. But in her tradition of correspondence by letters, she began to carry on a more vigorous correspondence with her many African friends whom she still holds dear to her heart. She sends them sermon outlines, encouragement and friendship.

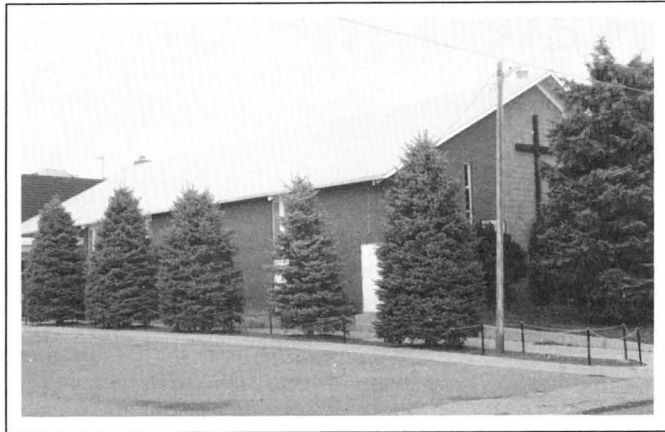
In her office a motto reads, "Each day a work of art for my Lord". This has been, and continues to be, her aim and desire. In her own unique way, she decorates people's lives with "little extra" services, out of love and gratitude for her Lord.



Nettie Berg with a few of her Mailbox Bible Club friends in Coaldale

# ALBERTA

## The south



**Coaldale Mennonite Brethren Church**  
2114-18th Street  
Coaldale, Alberta  
T0K 0L0

On May 23, 1926 the 21 charter members, all recently immigrated from Russia, organized the Coaldale MB Church. It was the first MB Church in Alberta. The first services were held in the hayloft of a barn on the Lathrop farm, near Coaldale. During the winter, services were held in a public school in town. By the end of 1928 a building, north of Coaldale, was purchased. It was dedicated on January 27, 1929.

The influx of immigrants continued and in the same year an addition was built. Three years later a second addition was built and by 1939 the church membership had risen to 433. In that year a larger sanctuary was constructed and dedicated July 2.

The present sanctuary was dedicated May 16, 1971 and is situated in the town. It has a seating capacity of 450.

In 1937 a Thanksgiving celebration was held, to rejoice for God's leading in the emigration from Russia. The occasion was attended by CPR officials, David Toews, Rosthern, and B.B. Janz of Coaldale.

The congregation operated a German Saturday School from 1927 to 1971. It also operated the Coaldale Bible School from 1929 to 1961. In 1934 church members founded the Coaldale Hospital. Members of the church were also instrumental in the operation of the Alberta Mennonite High School.

Leading ministers of the church have been: Klaas Enns, 1926; Franz Friesen, 1926-1928; Benjamin Janz, 1928-1948; Peter B. Epp; Jacob Siemens, 1948-1956; David Pankratz, 1956-1973 and John Dueck, 1973-1974, Rudy Heidebrecht, 1974-1988.

Present membership is 363.

Pastor(s): Rudy Heidebrecht, Ken Peters

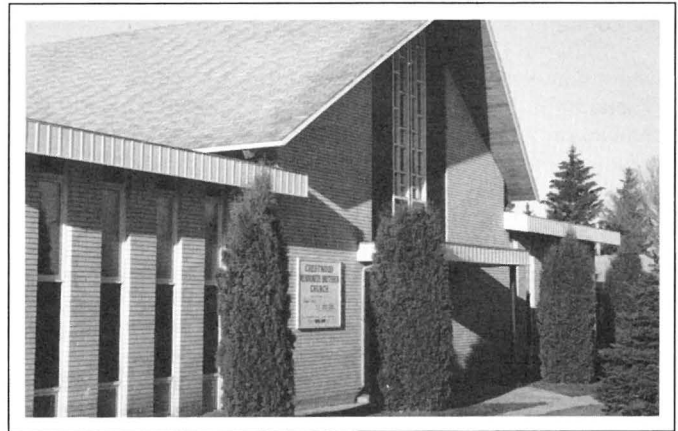
**Hays Gospel Chapel**  
Hays, Alberta

The Hays Gospel Chapel grew out of the Vauxhall MB Church. Hays is a small community 25 kms from Vauxhall. In 1986 the Vauxhall fellowship bought a United Church chapel in the town of Hays, with the intention of beginning a church in that centre. More than 12 families, who attended the Vauxhall church, resided in Hays.

During the present time the pastor of the Vauxhall congregation preaches in Hays as well as in Vauxhall. Also, singing groups from Vauxhall serve in the new Hays fellowship. In 1988 this group chartered and joined the conference.

Present membership is not available.

Pastor: pastoral vacancy



**Crestwood Mennonite Brethren Church**  
2348 Dunmore Road South East  
Medicine Hat, Alberta  
T1A 2A2

In 1965, under the direction of the Alberta Home Mission Committee, the Crestwood MB Church was founded. In 1968, with a membership of 21, the fellowship was accepted as a member of the Alberta MB Conference.

After several years of using rented facilities, the church launched a building program. In 1969 the sanctuary was dedicated to the Lord for worship and service. The closing of the Mennonite Church in the nearby town of Seven Persons resulted in the adoption, in January, 1975, of this church's members. Uniquely, these new members were allowed to retain their membership in the former conference as well. At the present time two families continue to retain this unique dual membership arrangement. The church has continued to grow in numbers and in spiritual vitality.

Present membership is 75.

Pastor: David Funk





**Westview Community Church**  
Grassy Lake, Alberta  
T0K 0Z0

In the spring of 1926 Peter Neufeld, Sr. and David Penner, Sr. purchased land near Grassy Lake, Alberta. Over subsequent years relatives and friends settled in the area and met in various homes to worship. As the group grew it needed larger meeting facilities. The Deer Park School was made available to them.

The group felt it needed spiritual leadership so it asked the Coaldale MB Church for assistance. Periodically, the Coaldale church sent ministers to serve the Grassy Lake congregation.

In the early 1940's the group decided to build. Volunteer labour completed the basement where the congregation met until 1948. During this time the main church sanctuary was erected. In 1970 an education wing was added.

In the 1970's, after much discussion and prayer, the church members voted to relocate in the village of Grassy Lake. In 1981 construction of a gymnasium was begun and on Mother's Day, 1982 the Westview Community Church was dedicated. Since that time the congregation has doubled in size.

Present membership is 64.

Pastor: Walter Enns



**Vauxhall Mennonite Brethren Church**  
Vauxhall, Alberta  
T0K 2K0

The first Mennonite families to come to Vauxhall moved onto "rent-contract" quarter-sections of land. Initially, church services were held in homes. In 1939, the MB church was organized and services were held in the home of leader Peter Langemann and in a local school.

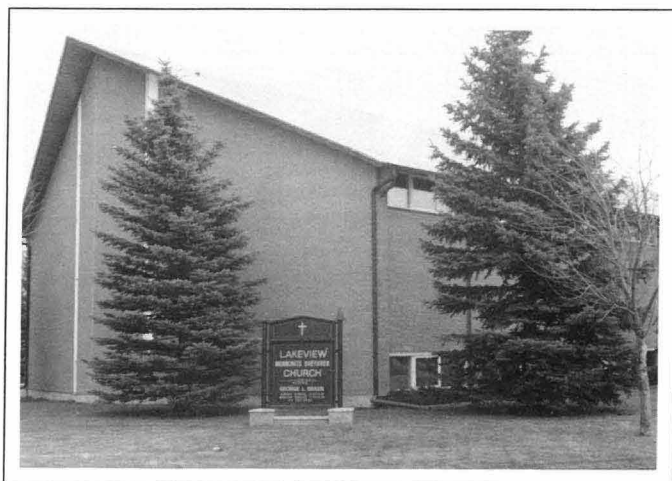
The group increased and the buildings of a vacant farmstead were purchased, torn down and the lumber used to construct a church building. This building was dedicated on November 5, 1939. On June 18, 1940 the building was burned to the ground by arsonists. The following year, a basement was completed a mile west of the previous site. This served as the meetingplace for the next seven years until, in 1948, the upper structure was completed and dedicated on January 30, 1949.

For three winters, the church conducted its own single-room Bible School with Jacob Pankratz instructing in 1937-38 and 1938-39, and A.J. Schierling instructing in 1942-43.

A new church was begun and dedicated in the early 1980's.

Present membership is 151.

Pastor: Adam Wiggins



**Lakeview Mennonite Brethren Church**  
1509-29th Street South  
Lethbridge, Alberta  
T1K 2X6

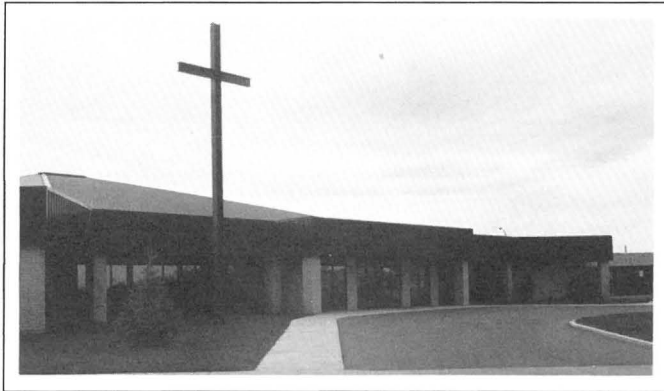
The Alberta Home Missions Committee, in January 1963, initiated a meeting for families interested in establishing an MB Church in Lethbridge. In March, 1963, the church was organized with 33 charter members meeting in Gilbert Patterson School. By October, 1964 the membership had increased to 40 and a building program was initiated. The two phases of construction involved first constructing an education building and second an auditorium. On October 3, 1965 the education building was completed. In May of 1971 the second phase of the building program was begun. The auditorium was dedicated on May 21, 1972.

Present membership is 91.

Pastor: George Braun

# ALBERTA

## Calgary and surroundings



**College Drive Community Church**  
2710 College Drive  
Lethbridge, Alberta  
T1J 4K1

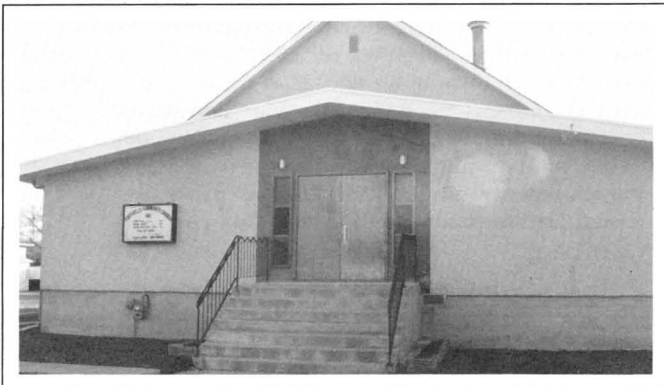
Originally known as The Community Fellowship, College Drive Community Church had its first worship service February 4, 1979. In March of the same year the charter service was held at which time 64 members joined the congregation. In June, that year the church was accepted into the Alberta MB Conference.

During the first year and a half, services were held in rented facilities. However, it soon became evident that larger facilities would be needed. The congregation moved to a school building but this also proved to be inadequate. A year later the congregation bought an older church facility from a Pentecostal Assembly. Once again the church grew out of its facilities and then on April 9, 1981 a fire destroyed much of the facility.

Again the congregation moved to a school building. With weekly attendance increasing, the plans for a building project took shape. Ten acres of land near the Community College were purchased; however, there was opposition to the building of a church on that site by the city. A day of prayer and fasting was held. Shortly thereafter the city offered a land swap in which the church could build on land that was zoned for such purposes. In March, 1984 the congregation was able to move into the new sanctuary.

Present membership is 210.

Pastor(s): Abe Block, Wayne Loewen



**Foothills Community Church**  
Pincher Creek, Alberta  
T0K 1W0

(no history submitted)



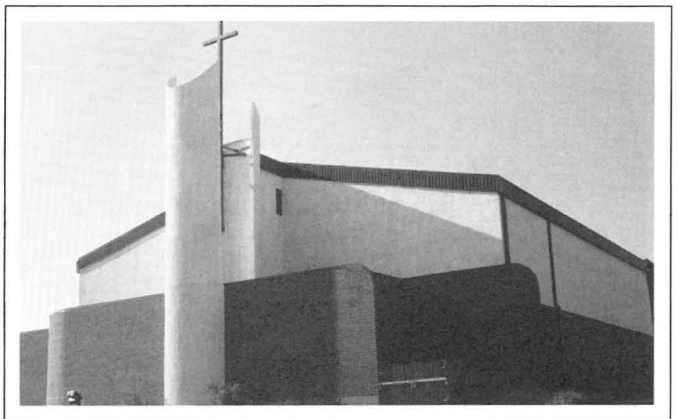
**Highland Mennonite Brethren Church**  
4018 Centre B Street North West  
Calgary, Alberta  
T2K 0W2

On May 6, 1958 an organizational meeting of what was to be known as the Calgary MB Church was held. Prior to 1956, the Alberta conference had employed J.A. Froese as city missionary to provide ministry to individuals and families of Mennonite Brethren background. Out of this concern a church of 42 charter members was formed. Later, this fellowship came to be known as the Highland MB Church.

Initially, Sunday services were held in a downtown Legion Hall with weeknight meetings taking place in the home of the church leader. One year later the present site at 40th Ave. and Centre B St. N.W. was purchased and construction of the lower auditorium began. Three years later plans were made for its completion and in January, 1962 the completed facility was dedicated. Since then an education wing has been added. In 1981 land was purchased for the construction of another church building. In 1983 the Dalhousie Community Church was dedicated for service to God.

Present membership is 203.

Pastor: Heinz Ratzlaff



**Dalhousie Mennonite Brethren Church**  
5511 Baroc Road North West  
Calgary, Alberta  
T2M 4N3

(no history submitted)





**Linden Mennonite Brethren Church**  
Linden, Alberta  
T0M 1J0

In 1925 Mennonite settlers around Linden began meeting in homes and in the Holdeman Church. During the summer of 1929, revival meetings were held in the area and a number of persons were converted and baptized. Some of these affiliated with the MB church. Many of the evangelists however, who had come to Linden, were of the Evangelical Mennonite Church conference. In 1933 the church chartered and affiliated with the Evangelical Mennonite Church conference.

On December 3, 1947 because of the proximity to other MB congregations the Linden church affiliated with the MB conference. On March 26, 1961 a committee was formed to look into

the construction of a new church. On August 20, 1962 pending crop conditions, the new building project went ahead. Land was purchased in the town of Linden and in September construction began. On April 21, 1963 the new building was dedicated.

In 1975 an addition was built onto the existing structure.

Present membership is 190.

Pastor: Ralph Klassen

**South Calgary Mennonite Brethren Church**  
2445-23rd Avenue South West  
Calgary, Alberta  
T2T 0W3

In 1976 a number of families of the Highland MB Church felt the need for a second MB church in Calgary. Services began in September, 1976 following a summer of discussion and planning. At the June convention of the Alberta conference the South Calgary MB Church was granted its charter and accepted into the conference.

Services began in the William Reid Elementary School. Then in 1978 the congregation was able to rent a vacant school from the Separate School Board. A strong commitment to lay participation and leadership meant that the fellowship did not employ a formal pastor until October, 1979.

The church emphasizes people-oriented outreach in an effort to apply the Anabaptist-Mennonite heritage to today's society. The fellowship has not undertaken any large projects but has sponsored a refugee family of seven.

Present membership is 58.

Pastor: pastoral vacancy



**Gem Mennonite Brethren Church**  
Gem, Alberta  
T0J 1M0

In fall of 1928 some of the first Mennonite settlers came to Gem, Alberta. Three denominations were represented; the MBs, the General Conference Mennonites and the Evangelical Mennonite Church. Initially, the three groups met for joint services. However, on June 2, 1929 the MB families met with the purposes of forming a new church. On September 29, 1929 the new congregation was accepted into the MB conference.

In 1932 the congregation constructed its first building, completing it in the summer of 1932. The interior of the building was not completed until five and a half years later. In 1943 an addition was completed on the old building.

During the mid 1930's the congregation discussed the need for a church Bible school. In 1933-34 the first year of classes were held at the Bethesda Bible School which continued until 1957.

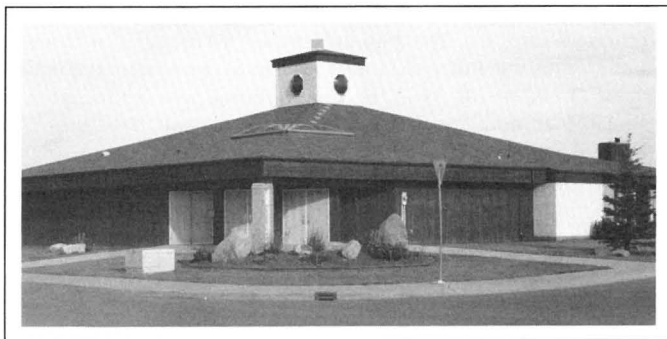
In 1948 plans began to construct a new building for the church. In 1950 a lot was purchased, construction began in 1951 and on October 5, 1952 the building was dedicated. This building, with renovations, is still used today.

Present membership is 92.

Pastor: Jake P. Doerksen

# ALBERTA

## Edmonton and surroundings



**Mill Woods Mennonite Brethren Church**  
3303-37th Street  
Edmonton, Alberta  
T6L 5P9

For several years the Lendrum MB Church discussed the formation of an MB church in the southeast corner of Edmonton. In 1978 the dream became reality. On November 5, 1978 the Mill Woods MB Church held its first service. They met in a local elementary school with about 45-50 meeting on Sunday mornings.

On May 13, 1979 the congregation held its charter service with 35 members. In June 1981 the group purchased land and one year later, in June, 1982, the building project began. On December 5, 1982 the first worship service was held in the building and on February 6, 1983 the dedication service was held.

Present membership is 78.

Pastor: George Quiring

**Red Deer Mennonite Brethren Church**  
Red Deer, Alberta  
T4N 5H2

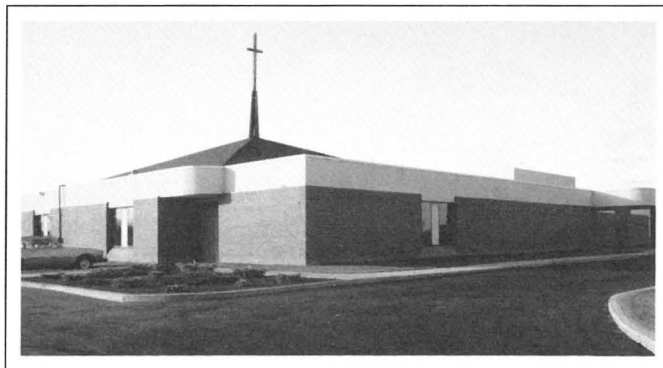
In the winter of 1982 a church planting couple, under the auspices of the Alberta conference Board of Church Extension, went to Red Deer to begin a church planting venture. There were some MB couples living in the city and the following spring the group began Sunday morning services.

Since that time the group has encountered struggles. Red Deer is an oil-town and when the recession arrived, the city was not exempt from the economic hard times. The fellowship lost many key members due to company relocation and loss of employment.

On November 14, 1987 the congregation decided to change its style and time of meeting. As of January 3, 1988 the group has moved to an evening service format. During the Sunday mornings the congregation members go elsewhere for worship services.

Present membership is 26.

Pastor: pastoral vacancy



**Tofield Gospel Church**  
Tofield, Alberta  
T0B 4J0

In 1928 a group of Mennonite believers began to meet in the Tofield area. The first business meeting was held March 4, 1928. Sunday services were held in various homes.

In the years 1936 to 1938, many of the church members moved to the Lindbrook area from Crowfoot. The group was too large to meet in homes so they began to meet in various schools for worship. By 1939 the congregation had outgrown the school facilities so in 1940 the congregation built the new church known as the MB Church of Lindbrook.

The congregation continued to grow. In 1961 some property was purchased near Tofield and in 1962-63 a new structure was erected. The church now became known as the MB Church of Tofield.

In 1977 the church changed its name to the Tofield Gospel Church. In 1981 property was again purchased, north of Tofield, and in 1982 a new church building was completed.

Present membership is 140.

Pastor: Calvin J. Buehler

**West Edmonton MB Church**  
Meeting at: Lessard Shopping Centre  
West Edmonton, Alberta

In September 1987 the Lendrum MB Church gave birth to Edmonton's third MB congregation. By 1985 the Lendrum church felt that it needed to divide and begin a new fellowship. In May, 1986 the West Edmonton church became a reality.

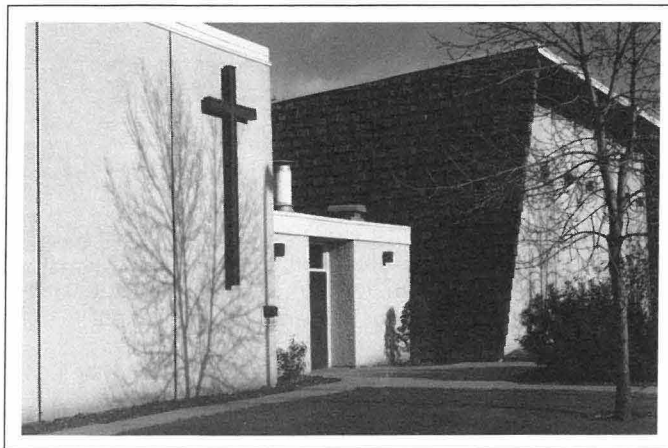
The core group began to meet regularly for potluck luncheons to discuss the groundwork for the new church. West Edmonton held its first service September 13, 1987. Presently the congregation is meeting on the second floor of the Lessard Shopping Mall. Attendance is between 50-75 persons. The congregation was accepted into the Alberta conference in March, 1988.

Pastor: Waldo Pauls



# ALBERTA

## The north



**Lendrum Mennonite Brethren Church**  
11210-59th Avenue  
Edmonton, Alberta  
T6H 1G3

As early as 1956 a group of people met informally in Peter Bergen's home for worship services. That same year the Alberta MB conference discussed the possibilities of planting an MB church in Edmonton.

In 1961 the congregation officially began worshipping in the English language. The Lendrum MB Church was accepted into the Alberta conference in 1962 and received a loan to begin construction of a new church facility. An education wing was first completed and dedicated in 1963. In 1971 construction was begun on the main sanctuary. This project was completed in 1972 and dedicated on June 25 of that year.

In 1978, after the earlier-formed Edmonton Christian Fellowship dissolved, the Mill Woods church project was launched. In 1986, the West Edmonton MB Church, was established. In 1987 the congregation celebrated its 25th anniversary.

Present membership is 221.

Pastor: Herb Kopp (pastor elect)

**Community Christian Fellowship**  
Meeting at: The Seventh Day Adventist Church  
Fort McMurray, Alberta  
T9H 2N8

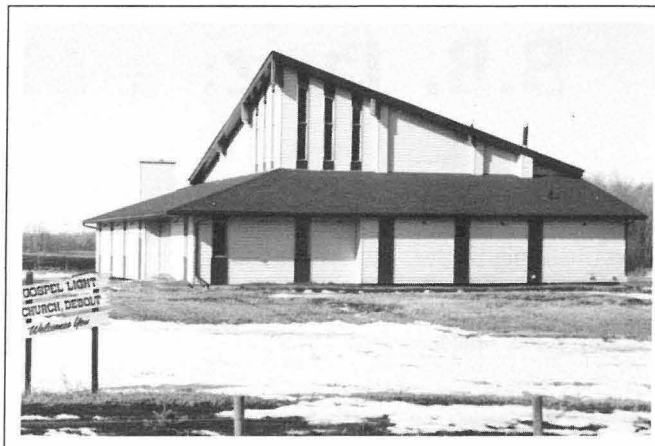
In the summer of 1974, fuelled by the keen interest of the Dave Balzer family, MB Missions of Alberta sponsored a summer "Servant Project" in Fort McMurray involving 12 students. This project opened further opportunities which Alberta Missions eagerly affirmed by sponsoring Roland and Maryanne Balzer (1974-1976) as leaders for the new fellowship.

In 1978 Tim and Bertha Geddert came to serve as pastor couple and by the second year of operation the congregation had become indigenous. On December 2, 1978 the church was chartered.

The fellowship meets in rented facilities and the homes of members are used for Bible studies. The congregation continues to follow the "servant" theme on which it was founded. The fellowship is characterized by informal friendliness and a commitment to the community of believers.

Present membership is 29.

Pastor(s): Roland Balzer, Peggy Voth



**Gospel Light Church**  
Debolt, Alberta  
T0H 1B0

(no history submitted)



**La Glace Bible Fellowship Church**  
La Glace, Alberta  
T0H 2J0

In 1928 Mennonite settlers came from Saskatchewan to LaGlace and began meeting that year. During one of the first meetings someone suggested that each person tell their own conversion story. This took several Sundays to complete but the result was a spirit of unity among the group.

The church remained unaffiliated at first, but with the encouragement of the Coaldale MB Church, it joined the MB conference.

The congregation began a Bible School in 1934 to train its Sunday School teachers. However, when several families moved away the school was closed.

In 1960, with the old church building in a bad state of repair, it was decided that the Bible School building should be moved on to the old foundation. This was completed in 1961. On June 1980 the present structure was completed and dedicated.

Present membership is 47.

Pastor: Peter Boschman

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# B.B. Janz: a Mennonite Moses

B.B. Janz was born in 1877 in Conteniusfeld, Russia. His father, Benjamin B. Janz, after whom young Janz was named, was a gracious man whose generosity to others often overextended the family budget. His mother Helene's frugality helped hold the family together.

At school young Benjamin proved to be an average student, but what he lacked in brilliance he overcame with hard work.

During the years 1892-95 he shared a dormitory room with almost a dozen students. After-school hours were unsupervised. Studying was out of the question. "Impervious to taunts and ridicule," writes John B. Toews in *With Courage To Spare*, "he plugged his ears and conscientiously pursued a book in some corner" (p.11).

In high school young Janz aspired to become a teacher. As a small landholder, Benjamin Sr. could not afford to send his son to school. However, high school graduates were permitted to teach elementary school and young Benjamin was accepted as a teacher.

It was a disastrous experience. "Never before," he wrote years later (in the third person), "had a need made him so dependent on God".

After searching scripture, particularly focussing on Isaiah 43, he came to the illuminating truth that his sins were forgiven and he was free.

He was baptized into the Alexandertal MB Church in August, 1897. His parents objected to this baptism. His mother, when asked if she was happy about his baptism, retorted, "Bringing him to the cemetery would not be as difficult as this".

After his baptism he plunged actively into service. He joined the choir, helped in Sunday school and eventually began to preach.

On September 25, 1905 he married Maria Rogalsky and not long after, in 1909, was elected leader of the Brethren congregation in Tiege.

World War I brought a crisis to young Janz. In late 1918, Nestor Ivanovich Makhno conducted a reign of terror and plunder in this region. In reaction to this barbarity a *Selbschutz* movement emerged. Janz faced this threat head on. He demanded unanimous and decisive nonresistance from the Mennonites.

By 1921 famine had begun to stalk the land. Janz knew there was bread in North America. There was only one thing to do—to pursue emigration possibilities. After many tries, contact was made by letter to the North American brethren and a massive food aid project was launched through MCC. In 1922 these food stuffs began to arrive in Russia.

Janz, however, remained an ardent emigrationist. As leader of the *Verband* he began negotiations with the state. These negotiations with the Soviet officials were very difficult. Letter writing and face to face consultations were frequent and intense. More than once it was feared that all was lost.

Finally, after being called to the dreaded Lubyanka prison in Moscow for interrogation, clearance was granted for Mennonites to leave Russia.

On June 23, 1924 the first group of 453 persons left Russia. Through much wrangling other groups were finally released. As well, on January 28, 1926, the train carrying Janz left Kharkov. The freedom he had won for so many, he now himself attained.

In July, 1927 he arrived in Coaldale, Alberta where he purchased a farm on credit. But it wasn't long until Janz was back in his old lifestyle. If he wasn't working with the Board of Colonization in Rosthern, he was travelling in the United States churches appealing for funds to help the desperately poor immigrants. More than once his family wished, "If only Benjamin would soon come home".

In 1927, when the Coaldale church was organized and a worship centre was erected, the call went out to Janz to be its leader. Once again the community competed with family for Janz's time. Maria, his wife, and his six children bore the brunt of this reality.

Leading the new, emerging church at Coaldale was not an easy task. The members, coming as they did from many different regions, had differing expectations and customs. These differences, which expressed themselves at church meetings were "as mildew on his soul". There was no strife, only a lack of consensus.

This nettled Janz greatly. His Russian experience had conditioned him to working with civic leaders where diplomacy, tactics and decision-making "was largely independent of constituency approval". Now, he needed to work within a church community.

Gradually, stability and wealth returned to the immigrants. One of the thorny matters that needed resolution was the *Reiseschuld* (travel debt) which wasn't being repaid by some settlers and church members. Janz observed, in 1939, that it was time "to deal with the question energetically". The integrity of the church was at stake. By 1941 the debt size was greatly reduce and by 1946 the last payment was made.

During the Second World War, Janz won conscientious objector status for many. When asked if an unconverted Mennonite was eligible for such exemption, Janz replied, "I'll give it to him. I won't make any Mennonite shoot".

Janz, though fiercely loyal to the Mennonite Brethren church, was truly an ecumenist. In Russia he became aware of the strength that working together could bring to a situation, and in North America he could see the impressive work of MCC when it banded together in a project. But nowhere was this ecumenicity more nobly expressed than in his relations with the General Conference of Mennonites in Canada, when they, in 1945, wanted to form their own relief organization. His plea to heal the breach and work together did not fall on deaf ears. Many, in the General Conference, saw Janz as their own churchman.

In October, 1951 his wife, Maria, passed away. His own health began to slip and by 1959 he was too ill to attend church conventions. On October 20, 1964 he passed into the presence of his Lord.



# BRITISH COLUMBIA: a rapidly expanding church

British Columbia—land of gentle winters, abundant soft fruit, rain showers, towering Douglas firs, snow-capped mountains and rushing streams. British Columbia has been called “lotus land”, the “California” of Canada.

The growth of the Mennonite Brethren church has been nothing short of amazing. The Russian Mennonite Brethren came to British Columbia in response to advertisements placed in the *Free Press* and the *Mennonitische Rundschau*. The draining of Sumas Lake (the old water marks of the lake can still be seen along Sumas Mountain), through a series of drainage canals and a pumping station at Barrowtown, made excellent farmland available for Mennonite Brethren settlers.

The Mennonites first came to an area now called Yarrow. The first MB congregation in B.C. was chartered in this place in 1929 with 96 persons declaring their allegiance to God and church community. The amazing growth of this church, fuelled by immigration and families leaving the prairies, increased the membership from 96 to 971 by 1948.

Economic stability and wealth had come again to the Mennonite people. Yarrow, J.A. Toews notes, was described by non-Mennonites as the two “R” community—raspberries and religion. Indeed, the raspberry was king—at least for a while! The economic collapse of 1948 brought much anguish and loss to the settlers. This prompted many families to look for alternate employment.

Therefore, during these years, in the early 1950s, the Vancouver churches experienced unparalleled growth. In a little more than a decade the single Vancouver

church (43rd Ave. congregation) blossomed into six congregations.

In the meantime, settlement of the Abbotsford area, where the removal of huge stumps of this recently deforested region opened good farmland, continued strongly. From the South Abbotsford congregation alone, many new churches were daughtered.

Concern for education marked the emerging MB church. Bible schools in East Chilliwack, Yarrow, Black Creek and Abbotsford flourished. One by one these eventually died or merged with one another. Today Columbia Bible College and the Mennonite Educational Institute continue to bear witness to this concern for Christian education.

Growth has continued to be a distinguishing mark of the B.C. church. Churches dot the landscape from Van-

couver Island, throughout the whole Fraser Valley, north to Fort St. John and Prince Rupert, and east into the Okanagan Valley and the Kettle Valley. Some churches have been created out from within existing churches, others spring up through the interest of a few local families who want to pass on their common spiritual heritage.

The only region not permeated by Mennonite Brethren presence are the Kootenays—the southeast corner of B.C.

Today, 63 churches (and counting) and 10,203 members make up this, the largest provincial conference, in Canada.

## 1929 First Mennonite Brethren church at Yarrow

|      |                |
|------|----------------|
| 1945 | 2,056 members  |
| 1967 | 5,339 members  |
| 1987 | 10,203 members |



A typical membership class at the Willingdon MB Church, which has grown from 325 members in 1975 to over 1100 members today.

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# Two involved churchmen:

## Herbert J. Brandt

Herbert Brandt has worked at the provincial, national and international level in the Mennonite Brethren church for over 30 years. He is optimistic about the future of the MB church and is thankful for evidences of renewal.

Born in Greenfarm, Saskatchewan to the John K. and Anna Brandt, he spent his teenage years in Winkler, Manitoba. While attending high school, at Mennonite Collegiate Institute in Gretna, Manitoba, Herb accepted Christ, during the summer before he began grade 11.

Following graduation from high school he received his military call. Rather than taking up arms, he claimed conscientious objector status and served in a Brandon, Manitoba hospital, for three years.

After the war Brandt attended Prairie Bible Institute, Three Hills, Alberta. Here he studied for four years and prepared for missionary service. However, due to health reasons he was not able to serve in foreign missions.

Brandt turned to teacher's training and subsequently taught for 10 years in Vancouver. During this time he received his Bachelor of Education degree from University of British Columbia.

In Vancouver he met and married Anne Kroeker. He and Anne have been involved in church work all of their married life.

A significant early involvement for the Brandts was the Pacific Grace Mission in Vancouver. Serving on the Pacific Grace Mission board initiated Herb into church and conference service. He has, since then, served on the Board of Reference and Counsel, the Board of Missions and Services, the North American conference Board of Reference and Counsel and he presently is serving as the North American conference moderator. He has also served in other board and executive positions at the various levels of conference. God has given him a gift for this invaluable type of service.

Since the early 1960s the Brandts have been called to pastor congregations. He is a graduate of North West Baptist Theological Seminary. His pastorates include Killarney Park, Vancouver, Richmond Bethel, Richmond, B.C. and his present service at Kelowna, B.C.

Herb Brandt has a vision for the MB conference that is worldwide, continent-wide and nation-wide. "The influence of our churches will only increase if we are willing to minister to the needs of people."

Herb and Anne Brandt are gifts to the Mennonite Brethren conference. They work willingly with people at every level of church affairs. We are privileged to have them among us.

## Peter R. Toews

When you visit the home of Peter and Lydia Toews, the first thing you will notice is the beautiful rose garden. Peter and Lydia have become knowledgeable about roses and their care. This is an aspect of their interest in gardening and reflects the same care and labour they put into the conference.

When asked whether he considered himself as a teaching preacher or a preaching teacher, P.R., as he was affectionately known to many, suggested that his first love was teaching, but over the years he had developed a great commitment to preaching.

Peter Toews grew up in Coaldale, Alberta. Although he began attending public school, he had to relinquish formal education at age 14. He did not, however, completely give up on education. He has continued to enroll in courses at various institutions, and still does so. This acquired knowledge, added to life experience, has endowed him with a thorough education.

His teaching career began at the Coaldale Bible School (1949) where he served for three years. In those days Bible school terms were only five months in length, therefore it was necessary to find some other means of support during the intermission between school years.

He began his pastoral ministry in Hepburn in 1952. From there he moved to Vancouver to serve in the Fraserview church. He was the first salaried pastor employed by the church. During these years his interest in church work grew. From the Fraserview church Toews moved to serve as pastor in Dinuba, California.

After serving in Dinuba, he was called to serve as president of Columbia Bible Institute. He says that he invested his major energies in his work at the school (1967-1978). These were the years of turmoil on the university campuses and some of this spilled over into the Bible schools and churches. The work was difficult, even discouraging at times. But the rewards, according to Toews, are seeing how many of his former students are now active in missions and church work.

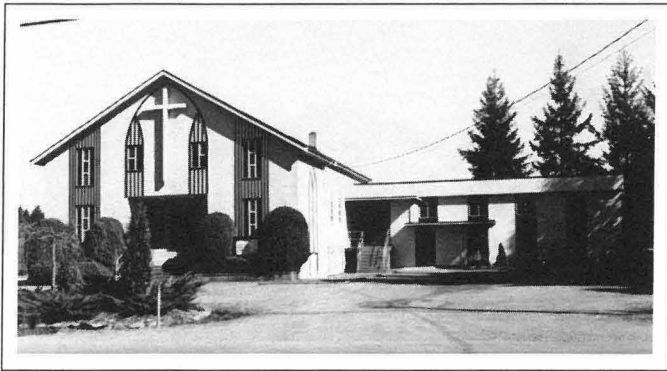
In 1978 the Toews were called to the pastorate at the Elmwood church in Winnipeg where they served for three years. Following this ministry Toews became the Canadian conference's first conference minister.

Peter and Anne officially retired in 1983. He said that he had looked forward to retirement, but found that on Sundays he still felt like a pastor. Since their retirement the Toews have served as interim pastor for various congregations.

Peter R. Toews loves the worldwide church and the MB conference he has served so faithfully. He is confident that, by God's grace, the church will continue to be built.

# BRITISH COLUMBIA

## The Island/Howe Sound



**Black Creek Mennonite Brethren Church**  
7898 Island Highway  
Black Creek, British Columbia  
V0R 1C0

On December 30, 1937, 17 Christians in Black Creek agreed unanimously to form an MB church. On January 6, 1935 this decision was formalized.

Land for a building site was donated by two members and a building fund established. On January 1, 1937 the new structure was dedicated. This building served the congregation until 1953 when the core of the present building was dedicated. The building has since been lengthened and an education wing has been added. From its inception the congregation has affiliated with the MB conference.

Many people came to Black Creek in hopes of establishing a farming community. However, the land was stubborn, therefore farming has not become a staple of the economy, rather a sideline. Several families and individuals have returned to the Fraser Valley and to the richer farmland.

Present membership is 72.

Pastor(s): Barry D. Falk, Alvin Philippsen

**Glacierview Christian Fellowship**  
Meeting at: Washington Inn Hotel  
Courtney, British Columbia

In September, 1986 four couples from the Black Creek MB Church ventured out to plant a church in Courtney, on Vancouver Island. There were no churches that held regular services in the eastern area of Courtney. Supported by the Board of Church Extension the group held their first service September 7, 1986. In early 1987 the group called Paul and Mary Koehler to be interim pastor couple.

The fellowship holds family worship services Sunday mornings in the Washington Inn Hotel. Home Bible studies are part of the group's effort to encourage further spiritual growth in their fellowship.

Present membership is 13.

Pastor: John Balzer (pastor elect)

**Neighbourhood Church of Nanaimo**  
Meeting at: Bowen Park Complex  
500 Bowen Road  
Nanaimo, British Columbia  
V9R 5N2

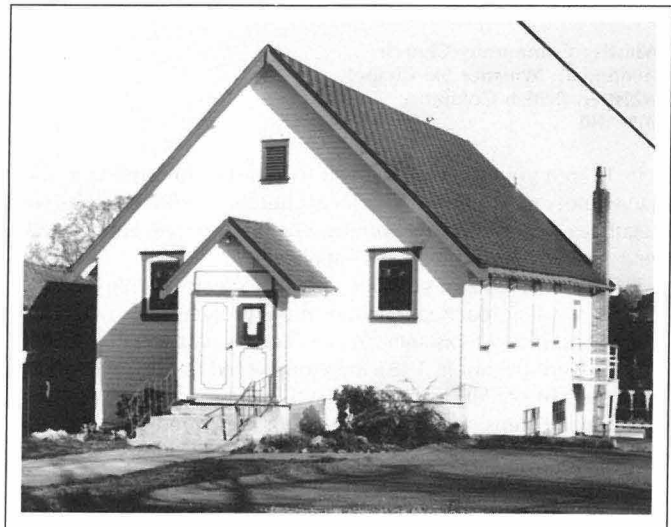
This congregation had its beginning in a group which was interested in forming an MB church in Nanaimo. The group had met for two years when they approached the Board of Church Extension to discuss calling a pastor. In August, 1981 a pastor was called and the group began meeting. Also the Willingdon Church youth group helped the congregation in canvassing the community. In October, 1981 the group held their first official service.

By September, 1985 the group was strong enough to purchase a five-acre parcel of land with the financial aid of the BOCE and the Fraser Valley churches.

The town of Nanaimo has been recovering from a financial recession in the mid 1980's and is experiencing fresh growth. This is also reflected in the new vitality that is coming to this church family.

Present membership is 29.

Pastor: James Toews



**Saanich Community Church**  
4566 West Saanich Road  
Victoria, British Columbia  
V8Z 3G4

In 1967 the Saanich area was accepted as a mission field by the Board of Church Extension. A pastoral couple was sent, in 1968, to pioneer the work. A charter was signed with 18 members in 1971 and in 1973 the Saanich Community Church was accepted into the MB conference.

For the first three years the fellowship met in homes. Later they moved to two successive local recreational centres. It soon became apparent that more permanent facilities were needed. In June, 1975 a building was purchased.

From the outset the church has experienced a continuing turnover of members, thus it has remained small. However, members find nurture and growth here.

Present membership is 50.

Pastor: Leslie Biggs



**Pemberton Christian Fellowship**  
**Taylor Road**  
**Pemberton, British Columbia**  
**V0N 2L0**

In May, 1974 the Regular Baptist denomination established a fellowship in the small logging community of Pemberton, B.C. This community is diverse in occupation and background. The diversity spills into the denominational arena as well. The first meetings of the new fellowship were held in the community centre. In 1976, another work, independent of this fellowship, was begun by the Open Brethren. Later these two groups decided to fellowship together. There was some turmoil and instability and one of the leaders left.

In 1982 the Board of Church Extension came to see if the struggling fellowship could be assisted. A pastoral couple, from Surrey, B.C., was asked to serve the group. They did not live in Pemberton but commuted in for weekends. The fellowship began to be encouraged. In September, 1985 a full-time pastor couple became resident. Under their leadership the group has continued to flourish.

Present membership is 22.

Pastor: Henry Thiessen

**Whistler Community Church**  
**Meeting at: Whistler Ski Chapel**  
**Whistler, British Columbia**  
**V0N 1B0**

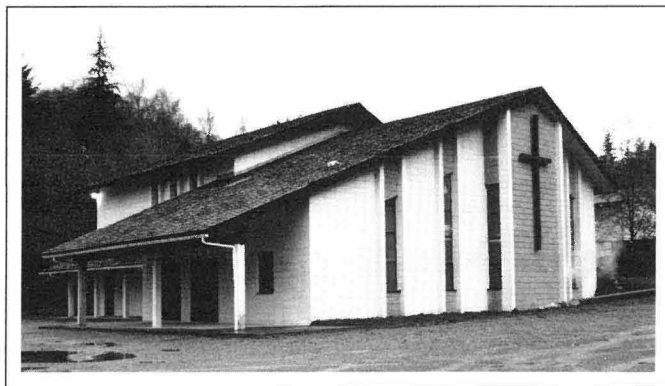
In 1976 a young couple moved to Whistler to provide a Christian witness in a town with no local church. Children's clubs were begun, as well as Sunday morning worship services. Services were held in the Whistler Skiers' Chapel.

In 1979 the church's leader wished to leave. Willingdon MB Church was approached to takeover the project, to provide financial and spiritual assistance. A new leader was found and Bible studies were begun. In 1981 the group voted to become affiliated with the MB conference and in 1982, with the help of the Board of Church Extension, a full-time pastor was hired.

Although Whistler is known as skiing community, there is a stable population in the community. It is to this community that the church is primarily focussed.

Present membership is 18.

Pastor: LaMont Schmidt



**Valleycliffe Christian Fellowship**  
**3901 Plateau Drive**  
**Squamish, British Columbia**  
**V0N 3G0**

Sometime previous to 1979, the Board of Church Extension had considered beginning a work in Valleycliffe. In September, 1979 a group of believers in Valleycliffe contacted the BOCE to confirm the desire to begin a fellowship. Weekly Bible studies and prayer meetings were held in homes. In January, 1980 church services began. They were held in a local mall.

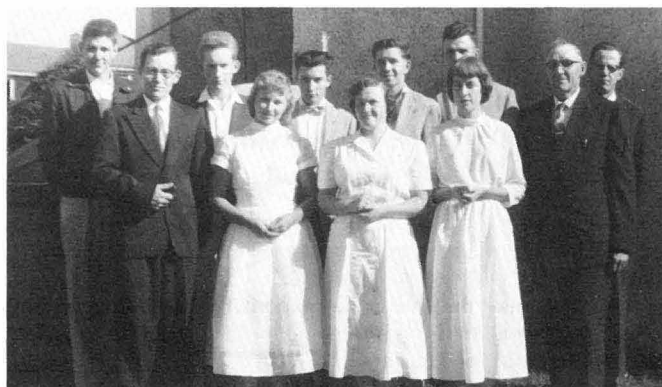
Before services began, in December, the group decided to hold a Christmas carol sing and invite the community. At this time an invitation to join the group in worship would be given.

In the spring of 1980 a Sunday school was begun. On September 7, 1980 the first baptismal service was held in the Squamish Baptist Church.

The church purchased a parcel of land in 1979 and began construction on a building in 1980. Amidst a change of pastors the church celebrated its charter service, March 29, 1981. In June, 1981 it was also accepted into the B.C. MB conference. Due to economic hard-times the construction of the church building fell behind schedule, but by March, 1982 the structure was able to be used. A dedication service was held June 20, 1982.

Present membership is 45.

Pastor: Sam Penner



**A December, 1958 Black Creek baptism.**



**A quartet of young men singing in the Saanich church (1982).**

# BRITISH COLUMBIA

## North of the Fraser



**Maple Ridge Community Church**  
**Meeting at: Laity Elementary School**  
**Maple Ridge, British Columbia**  
**V2X 3J2**

The Maple Ridge congregation began in 1984 in conjunction with the Board of Church Extension. In late February, 1985 a core group of 30 people met and extended a call to a pastor couple. The first official meeting was held on Easter Sunday, April 1985. In June, 1985 the congregation joined the B.C. MB conference. The church has met regularly in an elementary school gym.

The group is active in Sunday school activities and home Bible studies. They are also negotiating on the purchase of property for a church building.

Present membership is 81.

Pastor(s): Edward E. Goerzen, Dean Richmond

**Eagle Ridge Bible Fellowship**  
**1160 Lansdowne Street**  
**Coquitlam, British Columbia**  
**V3B 5V8**

In the spring of 1974, several families began meeting for home Bible studies in the hope of one day becoming a church. On July 1, 1974 the Board of Church Extension sent a pastor to minister to this group. The group met Sunday evenings but attended other churches for morning worship services. At this time the group was known as Burke Mountain Bible Fellowship.

The fellowship grew steadily and in June, 1975 were officially accepted into the B.C. conference.

After renting a local school for a period of time there was an opportunity to purchase property in a new subdivision. In December, 1978 property was purchased. Killarney Park MB Church assumed the interest on a \$100,000 loan for three years. Aside from this, the fellowship, now known as Eagle Ridge Bible Fellowship, was self-supporting as of June, 1982 when the sod-turning celebration took place. November 28, 1982 saw the first service take place in the new facility.

Present membership is 102.

Pastor: Harry Loewen



**Lake Errock Community Church**  
**Lake Errock, British Columbia**  
**V0M 1N0**

In the 1950's the Clearbrook MB Church began mission Sunday schools on Nicomen Island and in Deroche. It was later decided to amalgamate the two groups into one and begin meeting in Lake Errock. In 1960 property was purchased and in 1961 a building was completed.

In 1963 the group organized as an MB church. They remained steady until the late 1970's and early 1980's. The group was diminishing and was without a leader. The remaining members decided to implement a five-year program for visiting speakers to come to the congregation. In 1983, however, the group was again blessed with a leader. Since that time the group has sought to continue its ministry to the community, despite a high turnover of members.

Present membership is 19.

Pastor: Helmut Schmidt



**Dedication Sunday at Lake Errock in B.C. This church was begun as a Sunday School outreach program from the Clearbrook MB Church.**



**Mission Christian Fellowship**  
33507 Dewdney Trunk Road  
Mission, British Columbia  
V2V 4J3

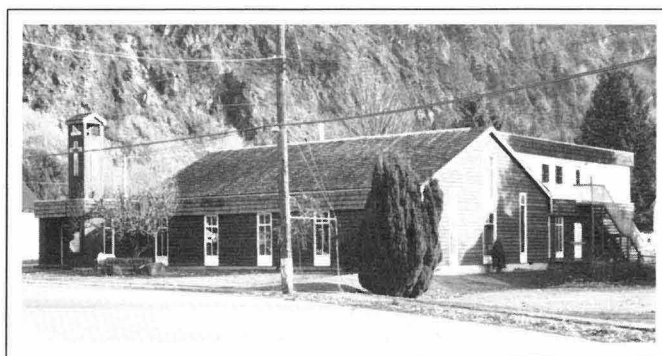
The Mission Christian Fellowship has its roots in a work begun in the McConnell Creek area in 1949. In 1963 a new church building was completed on Sylvester Road in Mission. This combined the McConnell Creek Gospel Chapel and the Dewdney Sunday school into one congregation. It was named the Mountain View Gospel Chapel.

The Mission Christian Fellowship began in November, 1981 when approximately 13 families left the Mountain View Gospel Chapel to form a new congregation. The group initially met in a home, but later they moved into an office complex. In the summer of 1982, the Seventh Day Adventist church allowed the congregation to meet in their sanctuary on Sunday mornings. The group met here for the next four years. In July, 1982 the fellowship joined the MB conference.

In September, 1984 property was purchased on Dewdney Trunk Road in preparation for construction of a new church facility. On July 14, 1985, with building plans finalized, a ground-breaking ceremony was held. One year later, on September 28, 1986, the first service was held in the splendid new sanctuary.

Present membership is 46.

Pastor: Harold Krahn



**Harrison Gospel Chapel**  
514 Lillooet Avenue  
Harrison Hot Springs, British Columbia  
V0M 1A0

In 1942 Mrs. Belle Rendall began a Sunday school work in Harrison. She, together with a Mrs. Williamson of the Salvation Army, held meetings in the Rendall home. In 1944 John Martens of the West Coast Children's Mission, also began a work. In 1945 the two groups met for Easter services. The groups continued to meet together and by the summer of 1945 it was evident that a meeting place was needed. That summer a chapel was constructed.

In 1947 another chapel was erected with funds from the MB churches of the Fraser Valley. On Good Friday, 1954 the first baptism was held with 11 candidates from the community being baptized.

In November, 1967 the congregation received its official charter with 18 members. In the early 1970's construction was begun on a new building. On November 3, 1973 the structure was dedicated. In the early 1980's the congregation considered relocating to a nearby town of Agassiz. However, it was decided to remain in Harrison.

In 1985 an educational and social wing was added to the present building.

Present membership is 69.

Pastor: Aldon J. Loepky



**A South Abbotsford baptism, July 23, 1961 at which 15 persons were initiated into the church fellowship.**

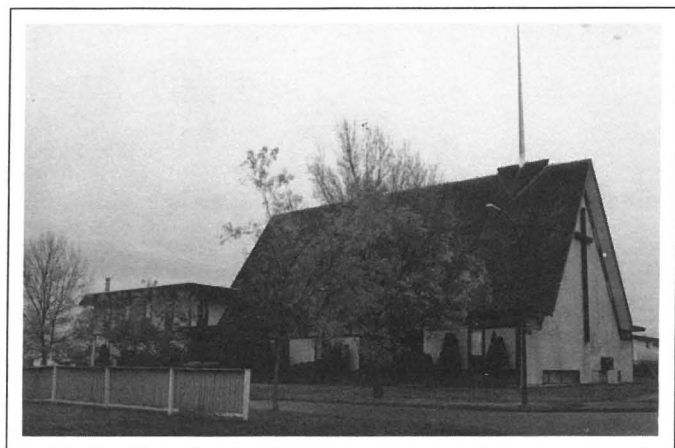


**The Harrison Gospel Chapel is pictured at a sod-turning service on September 8, 1972. Pastor Jake Friesen is on the left.**



# BRITISH COLUMBIA

## Greater Vancouver



**Culloden Mennonite Brethren Church**  
6060 Culloden Street  
Vancouver, British Columbia  
V5W 3S4

The Culloden MB Church has its roots in the Vancouver MB Church. The Vancouver church, having already divided a number of times was once again crowded. In 1969 the largest building project that the Vancouver church had undertaken was initiated. Approximately 75 percent of the members of the Vancouver church moved to the new Culloden Church together with pastor D.B. Wiens.

Present membership is 361.

Pastor(s): Rudie Willms, Walter Fast, Korne Neufeld



**Vancouver Mennonite Brethren Church**  
5887 Prince Edward Street  
Vancouver, British Columbia  
V5W 2X8

In 1936 there were no MB Churches in Vancouver, however a fellowship of families and individuals had been meeting for worship. In February, 1937 they approached the B.C. conference of MB churches requesting a charter. On April 27, 1937 the Vancouver MB Church was formally organized with 39 members.

Initially the group met in a hall rented from the German Lutheran Church. However, as the fellowship increased in size, it

became clear a building would need to be built. Due to war-time restrictions only the basement was completed at the time when the congregation moved in, on November 5, 1944 for the first worship service. It was not until July 31, 1949 that the upper sanctuary was completed.

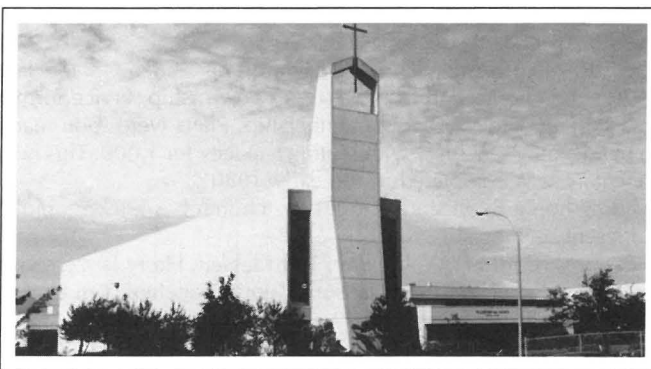
Membership continued to increase and in 1952 separate worship services were held, in the basement and the upper sanctuary. Each group had their own choir and minister. In 1953 a building project was initiated for what was to become the Fraserview MB Church.

On July 21, 1957 the first full-time minister was appointed. Soon the church became crowded and the Willingdon MB Church was formed. In the summer of 1965 the Richmond Bethel MB Church was formed from a Sunday school program sponsored by the Vancouver church.

Finally, in 1964, the Culloden MB Church was established as an off-shoot with 75 percent of Vancouver's members going to the new fellowship. The smaller group stayed in the old building.

Present membership is 176.

Pastor: Abe Klassen



**Fraserview Mennonite Brethren Church**  
11295 Mellis Drive  
Richmond, British Columbia  
V6X 1L8

Fraserview MB Church has its roots in the Vancouver MB Church. In the mid-1950's the newly constructed Vancouver church was full due to the influx of people into Vancouver. Therefore, a group of people, 238 in number, with the support of the mother church, purchased land and built a new facility at East 59th Avenue and Culloden Street. In November, 1954 the new sanctuary was dedicated to God.

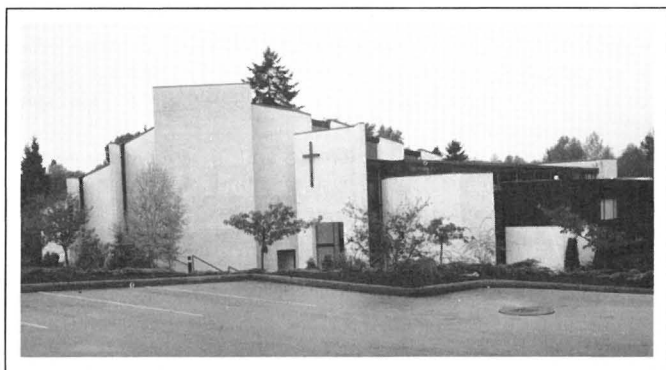
Membership increased rapidly and the facilities were soon crowded. It was decided that a daughter church should be organized. This was the beginning of the Killarney Park MB Church.

Since then the church has continued to grow and has built another, larger facility. In 1979 the congregation moved from South Vancouver to Richmond.

The congregation has been active in the initiation and support of ministry to the Sikh and Hindu population in Richmond and Vancouver. In 1972 the mission began and is now a chartered church in the MB conference—the Hindi-Punjabi Gospel Chapel.

Present membership is 428.

Pastor(s): Peter W. Nikkel, Ray Dueck, Roger Grose



**Willingdon Mennonite Brethren Church**  
**4812 Willingdon Avenue**  
**Burnaby, British Columbia**  
**V5G 3H6**

In 1960 the 43rd Avenue Church in Vancouver sent 110 members to locate a new fellowship in Burnaby, a suburb of Vancouver. With the assistance of the 43rd Avenue Church the new congregation purchased property and built a sanctuary on Willingdon Avenue.

In 1972 a Christian Education wing was added. In the late 1970's the church had to move to a two-worship-service format to accommodate a growing membership. Plans were soon made to build a new sanctuary with seating capacity for 1,000. This new sanctuary was completed in the early 1980's.

Using home Bible study groups the church has grown rapidly. Present membership is 1073.

Pastor(s): Carlin E. Weinbauer, Ted Klassen, Harry Janzen, Gus Gauer, Rudy Unger, Brian Carlson, George Sanchez, Tim Unruh, Shane Bassen, Norman Barr



**Richmond Bethel Church**  
**10200 Number 5 Road**  
**Richmond, British Columbia**  
**V7A 4E5**

The formation of the Richmond Bethel MB Church was the joint effort of the Vancouver MB Church and the Killarney Park MB Church. In 1965 the Vancouver church began a Sunday school in the Richmond area. This project grew and came to include adult worship services.

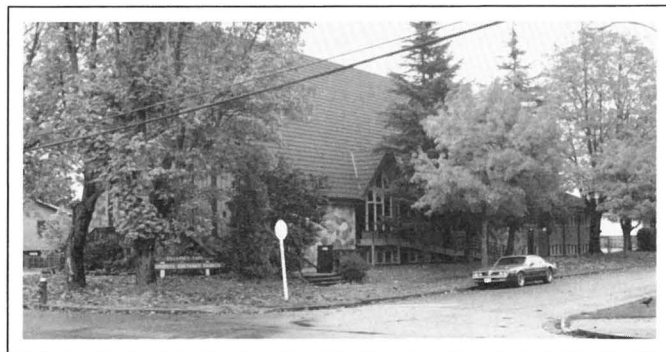
Sometime later, several members of the Killarney Park church expressed a desire to form a congregation closer to their homes in the Richmond area. However, it was not thought that two fellowships were needed.

The Culloden MB Church donated a small building and a tract of land in the Richmond area. On this land the two congregations hurriedly built an auditorium which was annexed to the existing small building. On September 13, 1970 the first service of the new church took place. This small complex of buildings served the congregation until December, 1972. At this time a new, larger complex had been built, at a new location.

In 1977 a recreation centre and additional classroom space was added to the present church structure. The church facility also houses the Seacliffe Christian School.

Present membership is 231.

Pastor(s): Henry P. Petkau, Allen Thiessen



**Killarney Park Mennonite Brethren Church**  
**6426 Kerr Street**  
**Vancouver, British Columbia**  
**V5S 3C1**

Killarney Park MB Church has its roots in the Fraserview MB Church. In the late 1950's the leaders of the Fraserview church anticipated a time when an MB church would be established in the southeast area of Vancouver. When, in early 1960 the Fraserview church became too crowded, a building committee was formed and they searched for suitable land to build the new church.

On June 18, 1961 dedication services were held at the Killarney Park MB Church with 178 members from the Fraserview church becoming charter members of the new church. On June 20-21, 1961, these members held business meetings to decide on a full slate of officers for all departments. At this time they also applied for church membership at the provincial and Canadian conference level.

Present membership is 202.

Pastor(s): Raymond O. Bystrom, Elizabeth Bach

**Greek Evangelical Christian Mennonite Brethren Church**  
**Meeting at: Culloden Mennonite Brethren Church**  
**Vancouver, British Columbia**  
**V5W 3S4**

In the summer of 1977 the Board of Church Extension felt the need to begin a ministry among the Greek population of Vancouver. George Anastasiades was called to begin the work. The first services were held in the home of the pastor.

The group increased in size, from very meagre beginnings, and began to meet for Sunday afternoon worship services in the Broadway West Baptist Church.

In 1978 the first baptism was held and three new Christians were baptized. The church is also involved in a weekly 15 minute radio program, in Greek, which is broadcasted to the Vancouver area. Presently they are meeting in the Culloden MB Church facility.

Present membership is 17.

Pastor: George Anastasiades

**Gideon Chinese Mennonite Brethren Church**  
**Meeting at: Killarney Park Mennonite Brethren Church**  
**Vancouver, British Columbia**  
**V5S 3C1**

The initiative for this congregation began only one and a half years ago, in 1986, under the direction of the Board of Church Extension. Since then the group has grown. On May 22, 1988 they received their charter and at the June, 1988 convention they will be accepted into the B.C. MB conference. Presently they are meeting at the Killarney Park MB Church in Vancouver.

Present membership is unavailable.

Pastor: Aymon Chu

**Faith Mennonite Brethren Church**  
**358 East 55th Avenue**  
**Vancouver, British Columbia**  
**V5X 1M9**

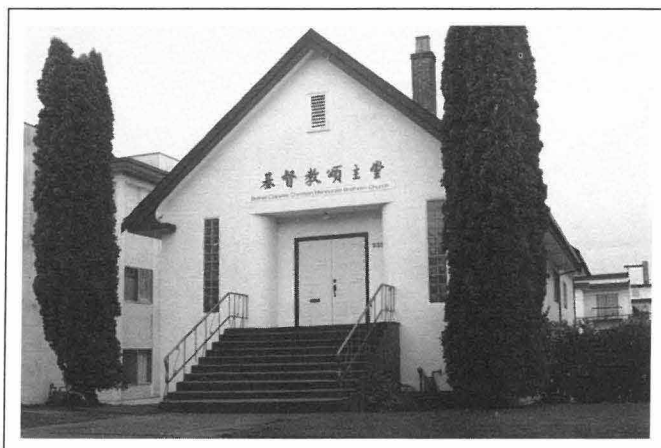
This group first met in the Pacific Grace Chinese MB Church. Later, they began to rent a Lutheran church where they are still meeting.

The core group has consisted mainly of Chinese college and career believers from the Pacific Grace congregation. These young people wished to worship in English and so they began meeting on their own. Since the initiation of the fellowship, people of other cultural backgrounds have begun to attend as well.

The group received its charter on May 6, 1984.

Present membership is 25.

Pastor: Tom Tan



**Bethel Chinese Christian Mennonite Brethren Church**  
**235 East 15th Avenue**  
**Vancouver, British Columbia**  
**V5T 2P8**

This group grew out of the Fraserview MB Church of Richmond, B.C. They met for three months at Fraserview and then moved to the Richmond Bethel MB Church for one year. In 1981 with the help of the B.C. conference, they purchased a church building in Vancouver. In three years they expanded these facilities to their present size.

Today the congregation holds two morning services, one in English and one in Cantonese. The church is now self-supporting after having been subsidized by the Board of Church Extension.

Present membership is 87.

Pastor: David Poon

**Hindi Punjabi Gospel Chapel**  
**Meeting at: The Fraserview Mennonite Brethren Church**  
**Richmond, British Columbia**  
**V5P 1J4**

The Fraserview MB Church, then of South Vancouver, felt a burden for recent immigrants from India. In 1972, in conjunction with the Board of Church Extension, plans began to start a work among East Indian immigrants. There were no Christians in the local Sikh community. The work was hard, but the many prayers and meetings paid off. In the fall of 1974 four East Indians (two Sikhs and two Hindus) were baptized into the Fraserview Church.

By 1977 the fellowship of the Hindi Gospel Chapel had grown to 20. The group met regularly on Sunday afternoons in the Fraserview facilities. On the suggestion of one of the Sikh converts the name was changed to the Hindi-Punjabi Gospel Chapel, for this would indicate to both Sikh and Hindu communities that they were accepted.

When, in 1979, the Fraserview MB Church moved to Richmond, B.C., the fellowship moved with them. On January 1, 1979 they started morning services. A Sunday school was also begun.

In 1981 the church was chartered. The fellowship has grown but continues to receive a subsidy from the BOCE.

Present membership is 31.

Pastor: Santosh K. Raj





**Pacific Grace Chinese Church**  
**1587 Frances Street**  
**Vancouver, British Columbia**  
**V5L 1Z2**

The Pacific Grace Church began as a work of the Board of Church Extension in the mid 1950's. It used the English language but from early on there were Chinese people attending. On December 11, 1963 a membership meeting was held to discuss the formation of a fellowship. The first service was held in March, 1964 in the chapel, which had been previously constructed.

The continued attendance of Chinese children in Sunday school and Chinese students from colleges and universities facilitated the beginning of specific outreach to the Chinese.

By the fall of 1972, there were 22 Chinese attenders and by early 1973 the Chinese were requesting that they have a separate meeting place for their services. A small store was purchased and renovated but the group soon outgrew this as well. By early 1974 the two groups were discussing scheduling separate services in the Pacific Grace Chapel.

The Chinese work continued to grow and by early 1977 the English fellowship at Pacific Grace was considering dissolution. As of April 30, 1977 the Pacific Grace Mission Chapel ceased to exist. The Chinese work has continued to flourish in the same location but under a new name—Pacific Grace Chinese Church.

Present membership is 121.

Pastor: David Chan

**Vancouver Life Chinese Mennonite Brethren Church**  
**Meeting at: Vancouver Mennonite Brethren Church**  
**Vancouver, British Columbia**  
**V5W 2X8**

The Vancouver Life Chinese MB Church had its beginning in the fall of 1985 when the Board of Church Extension began exploring the possibility of another work among the Chinese in Vancouver. This project was approved in 1986 and on April 10, 1988 the church received its charter. They are presently meeting in the Vancouver MB Church.

Present membership is 14.

Pastor: Timothy Ma

**Point Grey Fellowship**  
**Meeting at: Pacific Centre of Discipleship**  
**4000 West 11th Street**  
**Vancouver, British Columbia**  
**V6N 2B2**

In the early 1980's there had begun discussion of the possibility of starting a church fellowship near the UBC campus. In 1984 there was a recommendation for the establishment of a family-oriented church in the Point Grey area to serve community and student needs.

At this time the Board of Church Extension became involved in the project. Meetings were held, a plan was devised and a Bible study group was formed for discernment and vision building.

On September 7, 1986 this group met for the first worship service. They met in leased facilities. In June, 1987 the church was accepted into the B.C. MB conference and in July into the Canadian conference.

Present membership is 12.

Pastor: Palmer Becker (pastor elect)

**Vietnamese Mennonite Brethren Church of Love**  
**Meeting at: Culloden Mennonite Brethren Church**  
**Vancouver, British Columbia**  
**V5W 3S4**

In 1984 Camloc Le met with the Board of Church Extension and answered the call to begin a work among the Vietnamese people of Vancouver/Richmond. Le came to Canada in 1981 as a refugee and a boat person. In Vietnam he served as an Alliance church minister since 1956. During the communist takeover he was jailed twice. He then fled to Canada.

The outreach work is non-threatening and friendship oriented. It is quite successful. Le originally ministered to two congregations; one in the Vancouver/Richmond area and one in Clearbrook. It is the congregation in the Vancouver/Richmond that is his home congregation and which continues to flourish.

Present membership is 50.

Pastor: Camloc Le

**New Hope Community Church**  
**Meeting at: Junior Chamber of Commerce**  
**North Vancouver, British Columbia**

The New Hope Community Church was initiated, in order to fill in the gap of an MB church presence in North Vancouver. The ministry began in September, 1987 when a telephone survey was conducted. The response has been positive. On November 15, 1988 the group held its first service. And on January 10, 1988 the congregation was chartered. It will be accepted into the MB conference at the June, 1988 convention.

Present membership is unavailable.

Pastor: Eugene Harder

# BRITISH COLUMBIA

## Lower Fraser Valley



**Cedar Park Mennonite Brethren Church**  
5306-44th Avenue  
Delta, British Columbia  
V4K 1C7

In the fall, 1978 discussion began regarding the beginning of a MB fellowship in Delta, B.C. Contact was made with people who were, or had been MBs, and a meeting was held on October 15, 1978. Interest was good and evening services were planned. In January, 1979 a steering committee was elected. Bi-weekly meetings were scheduled and were well attended.

On April 11, 1979 a charter member meeting was convened. On September 9, 1979 the first Sunday morning services were held. There were Sunday school classes as well. In the afternoon of that day the dedication service was celebrated.

The group is presently meeting in the Delta Secondary School library but are in the process of completing construction on a new meetingplace. Completion and dedication services are planned for June 12, 1988.

Present membership is 62.

Pastor: Garry Prieb

**Peace Arch Fellowship**  
Meeting at: Upper Town Centre  
15150 Russell Avenue  
White Rock, British Columbia  
V4A 7K7

In the White Rock, B.C. area there were five families interested in starting a church group. In the early 1980's they were approached by the Board of Church Extension. The board was willing to subsidize the new fellowship.

In February, 1985 a young couple was called to pastor the new congregation. And on October 6, 1985 the group held their first service. Initially, the group met in rented facilities.

In February, 1987 the group moved to larger facilities to accommodate their growth. The congregation is now off of conference subsidy.

Present membership is 40.

Pastor: John Neufeld

**North Langley Community Church**  
Meeting at: James Kennedy Elementary School  
Langley, British Columbia  
V3A 4P8

In November, 1986 the Board of Church Extension asked Paul and Betty Fast, the pastor couple at South Langley MB Church, to provide leadership for a church-planting venture in North Langley. A core group from the South Langley church accompanied the Fastes, as well as believers from other churches.

The first service was April 12, 1987 with 43 in attendance. On May 31 five were baptized into membership. The congregation started out with 41 charter members. In June, 1987 the church was accepted into membership.

Present membership is 41.

Pastor: Paul J. Fast



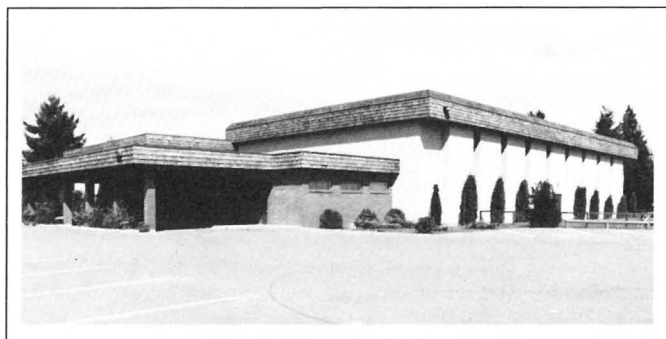
**Kennedy Heights Mennonite Brethren Church**  
11838-88th Avenue  
Delta, British Columbia  
V4C 3C5

In the early 1940's a number of MB families moved to the Surrey and Delta municipal districts from Vancouver and the Fraser Valley. On November 11, 1944 they met in a community hall for the purpose of organizing a congregation in the district. On June 9, 1945 the new congregation officially joined the B.C. MB conference. It was called the Strawberry Hill MB Church.

The first building for the fellowship was the Kennedy Hall which was purchased along with five acres of land. As the congregation grew in size several additions were built onto the old structure. Then in 1970 a new building was constructed on the same property.

Present membership is 149.

Pastor: Art Willms



**South Langley Mennonite Brethren Church**  
**20098-22nd Avenue**  
**Langley, British Columbia**  
**V3A 4P4**

In the late 1940's the East Aldergrove MB Church began an outreach work in the Brookwood area. Classes were held in the Brookwood Community Hall.

In 1958, the Aldergrove young people decided to raise funds to build a chapel in the community. Land was graciously donated and construction began that year and in the fall of 1960 the Sunday school moved in.

By 1963 several Christian families in the Brookwood area requested that the Aldergrove congregation help the group establish a new church—the Brookwood MB Chapel. On October 13, 1963 the first service was held.

On November 22, 1964 a formal organizational meeting was held. Within a few years the group outgrew their facilities. In 1968 an education wing was added.

During the mid 1970's the congregation found property on which to build to accommodate its growing membership. In September, 1978 construction of the new facilities began and by July of 1979 the facilities, though not complete, were being used. The project was completed in 1982. It was renamed the South Langley MB Church.

Present membership is 243.

Pastor(s): Marvin Schmidt, Michael Dick



**Pastor Rudy Janzen of the Kennedy Heights congregation, baptizing a person in the late 1960's.**

**Cornerstone Community Church**  
**10-15243 91st Avenue**  
**Surrey, British Columbia**  
**V3R 8P8**

In 1984 the Board of Church Extension established a pioneer work in the Surrey-Guildford area known as the Fleetwood Community Church. Later, Willingdon MB Church also showed an interest in the work. They too commissioned a pastor couple to begin a work in the area. It seemed only natural that the two projects be combined.

On August 10, 1986 the Cornerstone Community Church held its first service in the gymnasium of the Fraser Valley Christian school. On November 2, 1986 the congregation held its charter service with 66 members.

Home Bible study groups are an important part of the church's ministry. In February, 1987 a Sunday school program for all ages was begun.

Present membership is 99.

Pastor: Ernie Isaac



**Hillside Community Church**  
**2013-248th Street**  
**Aldergrove, British Columbia**  
**V0X 1A0**

In 1943 a Christian school teacher at South Otter Elementary school, south of Aldergrove, shared her vision for religious education in Aldergrove to a complete stranger on a Vancouver streetcar. The stranger was Hulda Neufeld, who in turn wrote a letter to the South Abbotsford MB Church in which she shared these concerns. The South Abbotsford church, went to the Langley School District to inquire about using the South Otter school for a children's Bible school. In the fall of 1943, a Sunday school was begun.

In 1951 a Mission Hall was constructed under the direction of the West Coast Children's Mission. In 1959 this hall was expanded and worship and Sunday school continued. The fellowship was accepted into the B.C. conference in June, 1963. In the spring of 1979 the building was once again expanded, as a new sanctuary was added to the west end of the building. On May 4, 1980 the new addition was dedicated. Recently the church was renamed the Hillside Community Church.

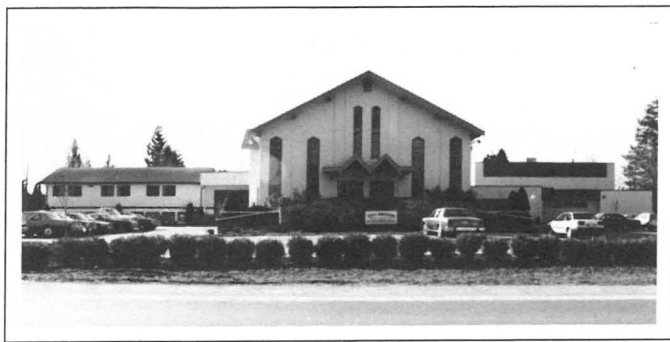
Present membership is 50.

Pastor: Vic Peters



# BRITISH COLUMBIA

## Central Fraser Valley



**South Abbotsford Mennonite Brethren Church**  
32424 Huntington Road  
Abbotsford, British Columbia  
V2S 4N5

In 1931 a group of Mennonite believers met in homes for Bible studies and prayer in what is now called South Abbotsford. At the same time, a group was meeting in the same manner in present-day Clearbrook. In the early years the two groups conducted bi-weekly services in the Farmers Institute Hall. Then, on May 1, 1932, the two congregations joined into one fellowship, as the Abbotsford MB Church.

In October, 1935 the group decided to separate into two churches again—the North Abbotsford MB Church and the South Abbotsford MB Church.

In early 1936 the South Abbotsford congregation erected a sanctuary on Gladwin Road. In 1936 and again in 1943 the congregation was instrumental in the formation of Bible schools. In 1944 the congregation also assisted in the formation of Mennonite Educational Institute.

Many new churches have grown out of the South Abbotsford church. In 1946 the Matsqui MB church was formed. A group formed the McCallum (present day Central Heights) MB Church in 1950. The King Road MB Church was initiated in 1966. Also in 1966 a group left to join in the formation of the Bakerview MB Church.

Present membership is 403.

Pastor(s): Cliff Janzen, David Epp, Ed Balzer, David Manual,



**Clearbrook Mennonite Brethren Church**  
2719 Clearbrook Road  
Clearbrook, British Columbia  
V2P 2Y9

The Clearbrook MB Church has its roots in the South Abbotsford MB Church. It was begun in 1937 in North Abbotsford and it joined the MB conference in the same year.

During the first years the congregation assembled in private homes for worship services. Then a basement for the future sanctuary was constructed and used. Finally, in 1940 the main sanctuary was constructed. This sanctuary was used until 1957 when the present structure was constructed.

The church has been involved in initiating Sunday schools in the Deroche and Nicomen Island area. A mission project was also begun in the Lake Errock area. The congregation helped found and support Mennonite Educational Institute as well as Columbia Bible Institute (now CBC).

The fellowship is comprised mostly of elderly people who lived eventful lives, experiencing God's guidance.

Present membership is 570.

Pastor(s): John E. Klassen, Ken Braun

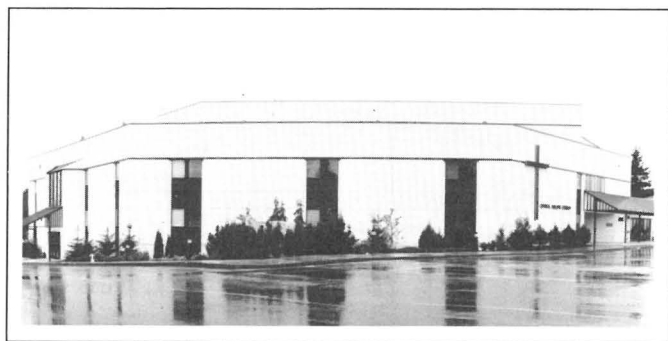
**Abbotsford Christian Fellowship**  
Meeting at: Terry Fox Elementary School, Babitch Street  
Abbotsford, British Columbia  
V2S 4N5

In 1986, under the guidance of the Board of Church Extension, a new church was established in the Abbotsford area. The Abbotsford Christian Fellowship has been meeting regularly in the Terry Fox elementary school. In November, 1986 the church received its charter with 30 members.

Present membership is 35.

Pastor: Jake H. Friesen

On June 24, 1956 a Clearbrook MB Church baptism added 26 persons to the church.



**Central Heights Mennonite Brethren Church**  
1661 McCallum Road  
Abbotsford, British Columbia  
V2S 3M4

As the population in the Fraser Valley increased during the 1930's and 1940's, the membership of the South Abbotsford congregation increased as well. By the end of the 1940's, it was evident that a new church needed to be organized. A group was encouraged to pursue plans for a new congregation.

A building site was acquired one mile south of Abbotsford and during the summer of 1949 a building was erected, largely by volunteer labour. On January 1, 1950 the new congregation, known as the Abbotsford MB Church, was organized with 197 charter members from the South Abbotsford congregation. Later the name was changed to Central Heights MB Church. This congregation has continued a strong growth rate, keeping pace with the expanding population of the region.

Present membership is 894.

Pastor(s): Herbert D. Neufeld, Blayne Greiner, Walter Janzen, Nick Willems, Al McVety, Hildegard Bandsmer



**East Aldergrove Mennonite Brethren Church**  
3160 Ross Road, R.R. 2  
Aldergrove, British Columbia  
V0X 1A0

On January 2, 1947, 30 members of the North Abbotsford and South Abbotsford MB churches met to discuss the establishment of a new fellowship in the Aldergrove area. Both the North and South Abbotsford churches were crowded. On February 4, 1947 a site was purchased. The basement was completed first and the group began meeting on June 15, 1947. Later in April, 1949 the upper sanctuary was completed.

The church has been active in several mission efforts. A Sunday school was started at County Line and in 1952 a chapel was built and turned over to the West Coast Children's Mission to be organized as a church. In 1948 a Sunday school was also begun in Brookwood. Again a chapel was built and a church organized in 1956. (This congregation later became known as South Langley MB Church.)

After 20 years of growth the congregation built an education wing, attached to the main building and introduced mid-week programs.

Present membership is 394.

Pastor(s): John F. Froese, Dan Warkentin, Arnold and Ruth Klassen



**King Road Mennonite Brethren Church**  
32068 King Road, R.R. 5  
Abbotsford, British Columbia  
V2S 4N5

In September, 1966 the South Abbotsford MB Church saw the need to serve the growing number of believers who could not understand English. Mennonites from South America were arriving in increasing numbers.

The original group began meeting in a small United Church building at the corner of King Road and Clearbrook Road. Through prayer and effort the work developed and the congregation grew. More room was needed. In 1967 an adjacent one-acre lot was purchased. That same year a larger building was constructed.

In the 1970's the congregation again experienced rapid growth. Many South American immigrants joined the church because they could understand the language. In 1976 an education wing was added and another two-acre lot was purchased with future expansion in mind. In the early 1980's a large, new sanctuary was completed.

Present membership is 405.

Pastor(s): Abe J. Konrad, Rufus Loewen



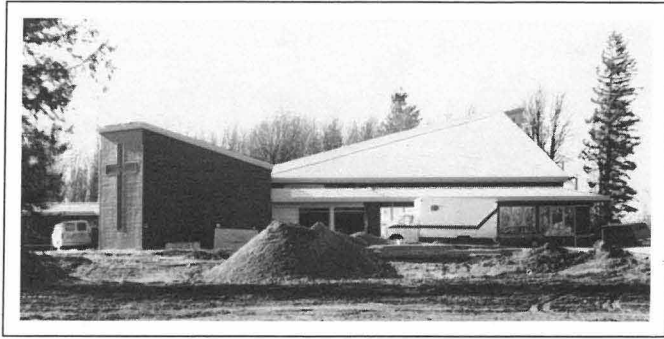
**Bakerview Mennonite Brethren Church**  
 2285 Clearbrook Road  
 Clearbrook, British Columbia  
 V2T 2X4

The Bakerview MB Church has its roots in the Clearbrook MB Church. By 1964 it was clear that the facilities at the Clearbrook church were inadequate. Coupled with this problem was the issue of language. The young people desired an all English service.

Church leaders grappled with the problem. A plan was developed whereby those interested in forming a new congregation would organize and begin meeting immediately in the Mennonite Brethren Bible Institute (now CBC). On April 4, 1965 a communion service was held in the Clearbrook church to show unity. This was the last service the two groups held together. On April 11, 1965 the Bakerview MB Church held its first worship service at MBBI. Since then a church facility was built with a major addition to the facility completed and dedicated in 1986.

Present membership is 568.

Pastor: Harry Heidebrecht, Henry Thiessen, Corry Gibson, Holda Fast, Dan Nickel



**Northview Community Church**  
 Meeting at: Mennonite Educational Institute,  
 4081 Clearbrook Road  
 Clearbrook, British Columbia  
 V2S 4N9

Early in 1980 several pastors met with the Board of Church Extension suggesting the formation of a new church in the Abbotsford/Clearbrook area. On March 27, 1980 a meeting for all interested persons was held in the Columbia Bible College chapel. The first morning service was held in September, 1980 in the Mennonite Educational Institute chapel.

On November 23, 1980 the congregation held its charter service with 58 members joining.

With the congregation growing, and still meeting in the Mennonite Educational Institute chapel, it was decided, in February 1982, that property should be purchased for a future building. A 10-acre site was located and purchased. The new facility is almost complete. Dedication services are planned for later this year.

Present membership is 227.

Pastor(s): Vern Heidebrecht (pastor elect), Walter Rempel, Frank Martens, Murray Phillips



**Highland Community Church**  
 3130 McMillan Road  
 Abbotsford, British Columbia  
 V2S 6A8

The Highland Community Church began as a project of the Board of Church Extension in 1975. For a number of years the group met at Columbia Bible College until the present facility was completed.

The congregation is comprised of many young families and individuals. The focus of ministry is geared to minister to this age group. The members come to the church from the surrounding Abbotsford-Clearbrook area.

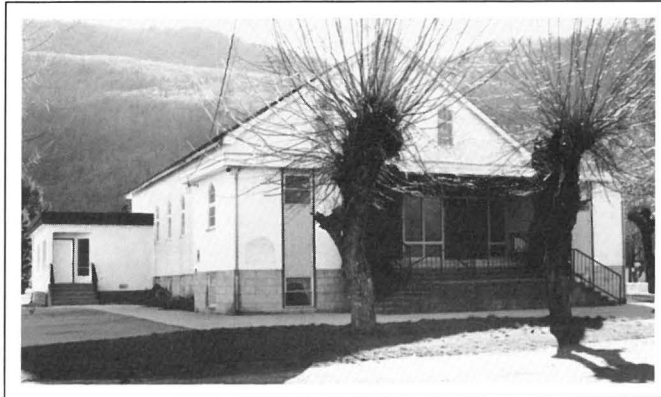
Present membership is 92.

Pastor(s): Elmer Dyck, Roland Balzer (pastor elect)



# BRITISH COLUMBIA

## Upper Fraser Valley



**Arnold Mennonite Brethren Church**  
304 Arnold Road, R.R. 2  
Abbotsford, British Columbia  
V2S 4N2

On March 1, 1942 about 20 people met, in a new community, in the home of J.B. Hamm. The new settlement was initially named Perrigo and the congregation was affiliated with the Yarrow MB Church.

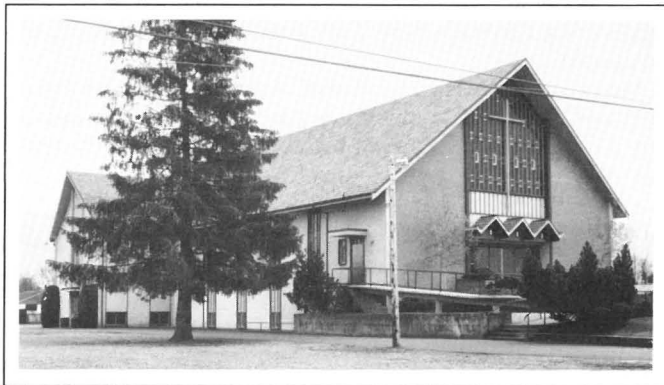
It soon became apparent that a church was needed in closer proximity to the community. In 1943 the group decided to build a basement. However, times were hard and monies were in short supply. Many volunteered their time for labour to help construct the basement.

On November 7, 1943 the Perrigo MB Church was officially established. Later the settlement was renamed Arnold, and so the church was likewise renamed. The small church was soon bulging with attenders, so, in 1944 it was decided that an additional structure would be added. By 1948 the membership was 225.

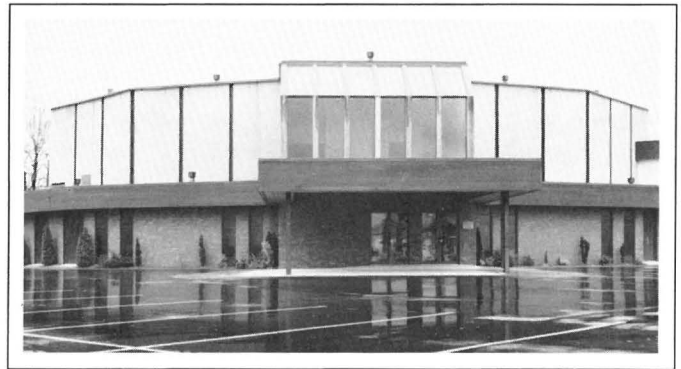
The church celebrated its 25th anniversary, August, 1968. Early in 1977 the interior of the church was remodelled. On November 20, 1987 a sod-turning ceremony was held for an addition to the church.

Present membership is 69.

Pastor: Irvin Penner



**Broadway Mennonite Brethren Church**  
46611 Maple Avenue  
Chilliwack, British Columbia  
V2P 2K3



**Chilliwack Central Mennonite Brethren Church**  
46100 Chilliwack Central Road  
Chilliwack, British Columbia  
V2P 1J6

Chilliwack Central (formerly East Chilliwack) MB Church began around 1943-44 when farmers from the prairie provinces came to B.C. to start dairies and mixed farms. For a few months the group fellowshiped in a small, rented church in Rosedale.

On January 6, 1945 the congregation was formally organized with 82 members.

From 1945 to 1958 the congregation was actively involved in a Bible school, until it ceased operation in 1958. In 1946, with the Bible school thriving, the decision was made to build an addition. Then in 1947 a group from the congregation purchased property on Broadway Street and in May, 1947, 60 families transferred to form the Broadway MB Church.

Once again attendance grew and the decision was made, in 1953, to construct a new facility to accommodate 400 people in the main sanctuary.

With members increasingly moving into Chilliwack, the decision was made to construct a new facility in Chilliwack. In February, 1981 the congregation met for the first time in the new facility, in Chilliwack. A further building project has since been undertaken and was completed on October 16, 1983.

Present membership is 166.

Pastor: Keith Wiggin

The Broadway MB Church has its roots in the East Chilliwack MB Church. In 1947 the people from the urban area of Chilliwack gathered in St. Thomas Hall and decided to build a church at the crossing of Broadway and Maple Streets. After meeting for approximately seven months in the St. Thomas Hall, the new building was dedicated in late November, 1947. In the same year the congregation joined the B.C. MB conference.

In 1969 a new structure was built on the same site. It was dedicated in December, 1969. In 1975 a small group of nine families left the church to form the core of a work in the Sardis area. The Broadway church assisted in finance and prayers.

Present membership is 253.

Pastor(s): Robert J. Friesen, Peter Falk



**Yarrow Mennonite Brethren Church**  
**41991 Central Road**  
**Yarrow, British Columbia**  
**V0X 2A0**

The initial movement of Mennonites into Yarrow began in 1927-28. At first, church meetings were held in settler's homes and later they were held in the one-room school. On February 3, 1979 the Yarrow MB Church officially organized and received its charter, with 96 members. It was B.C.'s first MB church.

In 1930 a new building was erected. It was used until 1938 when a much larger church was erected on the same site. This building, with some alterations, remains in use today.

Within 20 years of its founding the church membership grew from 96 to 971. The church helped found Elim Bible School, which served the church well for many years. In 1945, it co-sponsored the building of a private high school, and founded the Sharon Collegiate Institute in later years.

Present membership is 283.

Pastor: Wilf Richert



**Greendale Mennonite Brethren Church**  
**6550 Sumas Prairie Road, R.R. 1**  
**Sardis, British Columbia**  
**V2R 1A9**

The majority of families who organized the Sardis (after 1952 it became known as Greendale) MB Church were *Russlaender*. At first they met in homes for worship and Sunday school. In the fall of 1930 they began to meet in the local school and on January 11, 1931 were officially organized as a church. In July of the same year they became members of the B.C. MB conference.

Although the wages of the average member were low, in 1932 a church was built. As membership grew another larger building was constructed in 1940. During the 1940's membership reached its peak. However, in the late 1940's the economy began to suffer and membership decreased as people had to relocate.

In spite of a drop in membership, an education wing was added in 1954. In 1979 this wing was dismantled and replaced by a larger two-storey structure.

Present membership is 259.

Pastor(s): Len Doerksen, David Froese, Rudy Reimer



**Sardis Community Church**  
**45625 South Sumas Road**  
**Sardis, British Columbia**  
**V2R 1A7**

The summer of 1975 saw the Broadway MB Church begin discussion and planning for a new church fellowship. It decided that a church fellowship was needed in Sardis. The Board of Church Extension had also identified this need. Two Bible study groups had been meeting in the winter of 1974-75 and the board began working with this group. The initial Sunday service was held September 7, 1975 in a local school.

The group grew rapidly. It soon became apparent that the congregation would have to construct their own facilities. Land was acquired and in early 1979 the construction project began.

The congregation continued to grow. Church leadership implemented an innovative solution to crowded worship facilities. The group was divided into two groups, called communities. These communities meet separately for Sunday morning services. However, they share Sunday school, pastoral staff, administration and so on. They also meet jointly for communion, special services and other events.

Present membership is 218.

Pastor(s): Steve Miller, Don Klaassen

# BRITISH COLUMBIA

## The north



**Westwood Mennonite Brethren Church**  
3590 Dufferin Street  
Prince George, British Columbia  
V2N 2J8

Prior to 1960 any MB conference members living in Prince George were worshipping in the various evangelical churches in the city. There was growing desire to form an MB church, as well as the need for another evangelical church for the community. On September 25, 1960, under the leadership of John Esau, this new fellowship met in the city's civic centre. On March 12, 1961 the group asked for membership in the B.C. MB conference. For a few years the fellowship met in the basement of the parsonage.

On May 12, 1964 the congregation began services in its first church building in Peden Hill, just outside of the Prince George city limits. The congregation was called the Peden Hill MB Church. In 1974 the Peden Hill church and parsonage were sold and the congregation moved into new, larger facilities in Westwood, a subdivision of Prince George. The fellowship then became known as the Westwood MB Church.

Present membership is 220.

Pastor(s): Mel Fehr, Les Riediger

**Nechako Community Church**  
Vanderhoof, British Columbia  
V0J 3A0

In the winter of 1983, eight families in Vanderhoof agreed to explore the possibility of beginning a new congregation. In spite of a large number of churches in the area the need was felt to provide the community with an alternative in worship and leadership style. A request was made to the Board of Church Extension for support.

In July, 1983 the newly-arrived pastor couple, participated in the congregation's first baptismal service. On August 28, 1983 the Nechako Community Church held its charter service with 22 members committing themselves to service.

Since April, 1983 the congregation has met in an elementary school. With attendance growing steadily the decision was made to purchase property for a future building. Once this property has been paid for construction will begin.

Present membership is 35.

Pastor: John Hiebert



**Cariboo Bethel Mennonite Brethren Church**  
833 Western Avenue  
Williams Lake, British Columbia  
V2G 2J2

In 1963 a number of families began meeting in homes in the Williams Lake area. As the fellowship increased in size they began to meet in the Community Hall for Sunday worship services. The Board of Church Extension was invited to assist the group in beginning a new church. On May 30, 1965 the group was officially organized into an MB church with 17 charter members.

The thrust of the congregation has always been to reach into its immediate community and tell of Christ. There are many different backgrounds, religious persuasions and social groups in the congregation. The population of the community is rather transient and this characteristic translates to the church as well.

Present membership is 187.

Pastor(s): Alex Campbell, Gareth Goossen



While still at the Peden Hill facility, the Prince George congregation held their baptismal services at West Lake (early 1970's).



**Prince Rupert Mennonite Brethren Church**  
202-6th Avenue West  
Prince Rupert, British Columbia  
V8J 1Z1

The Prince Rupert MB Church had its beginning as an outgrowth of the Harbour of Hope Chapel. This was an MB mission work in the nearby village of Port Edward. The need was seen for a work in the city of Prince Rupert. This is a thriving port city where lumbering, fishing and the new bulk loading super-port are the economic staples.

The work began with Sunday evening services in homes and weekly home Bible studies. Then on January 20, 1981 a leadership council was elected at the first organizational meeting.

An older church building was purchased and the congregation began to meet there in 1981. In the spring of 1986 the congregation sold this building and purchased another at a more ideal location. The congregation has seen times of hardship but remains optimistic with a growing core of believers.

Present membership is 28.

Pastor: Helmut T. Janzen



**Community Gospel Chapel**  
New Hazelton, British Columbia  
V0J 2J0

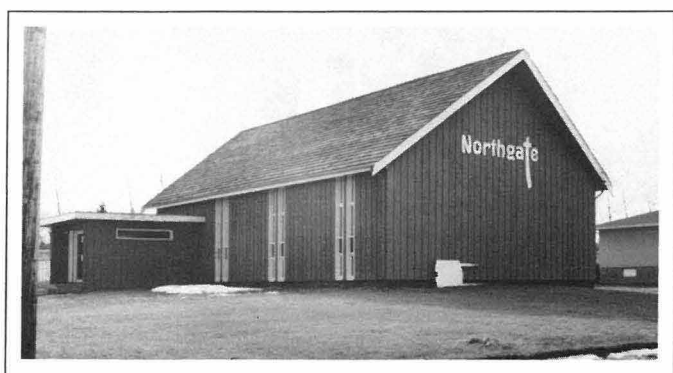
In 1948 two couples left the Fraser Valley to establish a children's mission in the interior of British Columbia. In 1962 they were joined by George Braun and in that year they built the West Coast Children's Mission Chapel in New Hazelton.

Through the years many MB teachers and nurses, sent to northern reserves, served and worshipped in the chapel. By 1962 a core of 12 adults formed the charter membership. The group was interdenominational and grew rapidly. By 1976 they had outgrown their worship facilities and so they constructed a log chapel which serves them still.

In 1980 the fellowship voted to become interdenominational and leave the MB conference. However, later, in 1986 the congregation once again joined the MB conference. The group is especially active in outreach to children and families.

Present membership is 20.

Pastor: Bill Keyes



**Northgate Mennonite Brethren Church**  
1800-109th Avenue  
Dawson Creek, British Columbia  
V1G 2V5

(no history submitted)

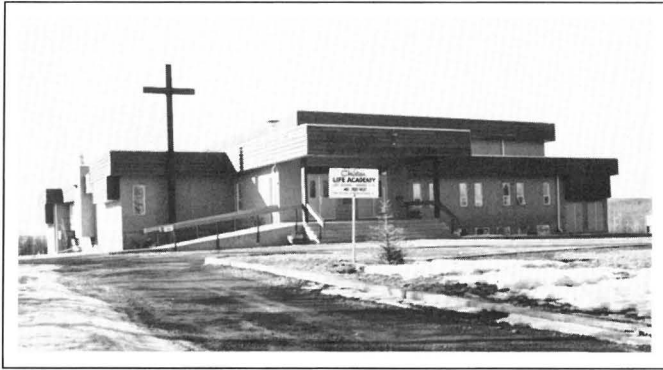


**Mennonite land seekers wear netting under their caps to avoid mosquitoes near Vanderhoof (1917)**



# BRITISH COLUMBIA

## The southern interior



**North Peace Mennonite Brethren Church**  
10816-106th Street  
Fort Saint John, British Columbia  
V1J 5P2

In September, 1960 a few families in Fort St. John requested assistance from the Board of Church Extension in establishing a new church. The call was answered and the work was begun. Services were first held in the Mathews Community Hall, then in homes and also in the Legion building. In the spring of 1962, they organized the North Peace MB Church with 14 charter members.

The fall of 1962 saw the initiation of a building program. The following spring the building was dedicated. In 1972, a new 280 seat sanctuary was constructed.

Further rapid community growth caused the congregation to move to a more spacious school gymnasium in the fall of 1979. Construction began on a new 450 seat sanctuary located next to the school. This building was dedicated in the summer of 1980.

Present membership is 204.

Pastor(s): Leo Siemens, Neil Klassen

**Westpark Chapel**  
Meeting at: The Seventh Day Adventist Church  
Quesnel, British Columbia  
V2J 1K3

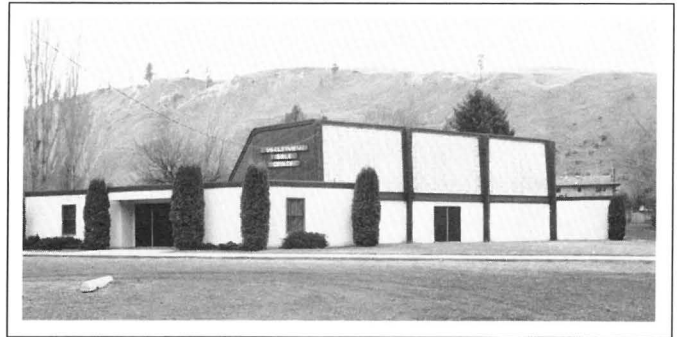
Westpark Chapel had its beginning in 1968. Originally it was the Sharon Baptist Mission named after its mother church, the Sharon Missionary Baptist Church of North Long Beach, California. In 1972 the fellowship took the name Landmark Baptist Church.

It soon became apparent that there would be doctrinal difficulties with the American Baptist Association. The church did not become affiliated with this denomination. Again the name was changed, this time to the Westpark Chapel. After several years of remaining non-denominational, in the summer of 1981, the fellowship became affiliated with the MBs.

Since its inception the congregation has had only one pastor couple, Richard and Eleanor Andres. Recently, this congregation has sold its church facility and meets in a local Seventh Day Adventist church.

Present membership is 24.

Pastor: Richard Andres



**Valleyview Bible Church**  
104 River Road  
Kamloops, British Columbia  
V2C 4P9

When three families from the South Abbotsford MB Church moved to Kamloops to find employment, it was suggested that they form a new fellowship. So, in 1967, they began holding week-night Bible study and prayer sessions. They approached the local school board for the use of an elementary school to conduct Sunday school. In October 1969 morning worship services began and the Board of Church Extension approved the beginning of the Valleyview Bible Church.

In early 1970 more families moved to Kamloops and the fellowship grew. In 1974 construction of a multipurpose church building was completed in which the congregation still meets.

Present membership is 82.

Pastor: Reuben Pauls



**The congregation of the defunct Oliver MB Church, taken on May 16, 1965**



**Armstrong Bible Chapel**  
**Armstrong, British Columbia**  
**VOE 1B0**

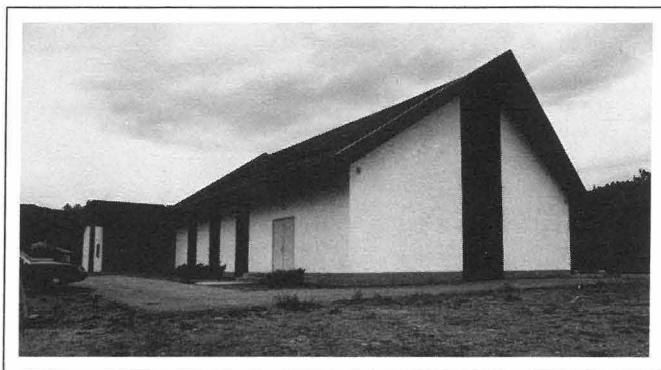
The Armstrong Bible Chapel began in August, 1976 when Hank and Alice Wiebe purchased a vacant church building and four families began Sunday school classes and, a short time later, morning worship services.

The group grew steadily, outgrowing the small church building. In the spring of 1978 acreage was obtained with the assistance of the B.C. MB conference.

In June, 1979 the fellowship chose to affiliate with the B.C. conference. In the meantime, a fine facility was built to house this congregation.

Present membership is 62.

Pastor: Ted Horton



**Gospel Chapel Fellowship**  
**7048 Donaldson Drive**  
**Grand Forks, British Columbia**  
**VOH 1H0**

In the summer of 1945, Peter Schroeder of the British and Foreign Bible society, came to the Grand Forks area to distribute scriptures and was asked to begin a work with the Russian people. In October, 1948, the George Martens' arrived. The work focussed on children and the first Sunday school was formed.

By 1954 the Martens' home was inadequate for the growing Sunday school. In September, 1954 the foundation for a church building was laid. On November 27, 1955 the new chapel was dedicated.

In 1965 the fellowship began an outreach through the new Pines Bible Camp. The fellowship continued to grow. In 1979 it applied to the B.C. MB conference to become a member church, with 34 charter members.

In 1977, with the aid of the Board of Church Extension, a building project to enlarge the facilities with a new sanctuary was undertaken. On June 4, 1978 the addition was dedicated.

Present membership is 72.

Pastor(s): Rey Nickel, Allan Pauls



**Kelowna Mennonite Brethren Church**  
**1423 Vineland Street**  
**New church address: 439 Highway 33 West**  
**Kelowna, British Columbia**  
**B1X 1Y2**

In 1947, as a result of an influx of settlers from the prairie provinces to B.C., the Kelowna MB Church was established. For the first year services were held in the local community hall.

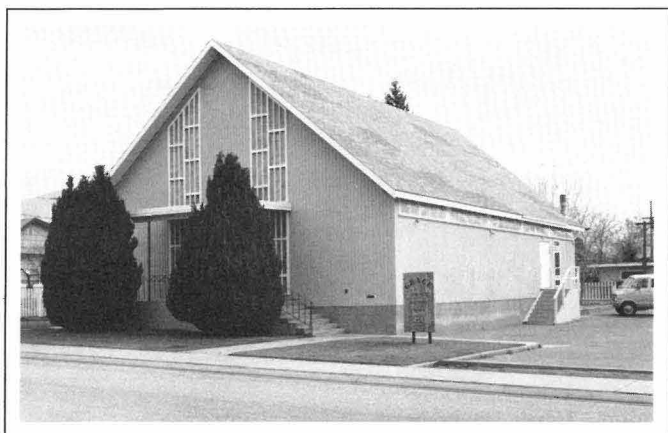
In October land was purchased and by the spring of 1948 the basement was completed. In another two years the sanctuary was completed.

The church continued to grow and began several mission efforts, including a West Coast Children's Mission work among the Courier Indians. In the mid 1960's the need to construct another building became apparent. In 1967 a new structure was dedicated.

In the mid 1980's the need for further expansion became evident and the church embarked on an ambitious program to provide retirement housing and to build a new church facility. Phase I and II of the housing project is complete and construction of the church facility is well underway.

Present membership is 261.

Pastor: Herb J. Brandt



**Grace Mennonite Brethren Church**  
**74 Penticton Avenue**  
**Penticton, British Columbia**  
**V2A 2M3**

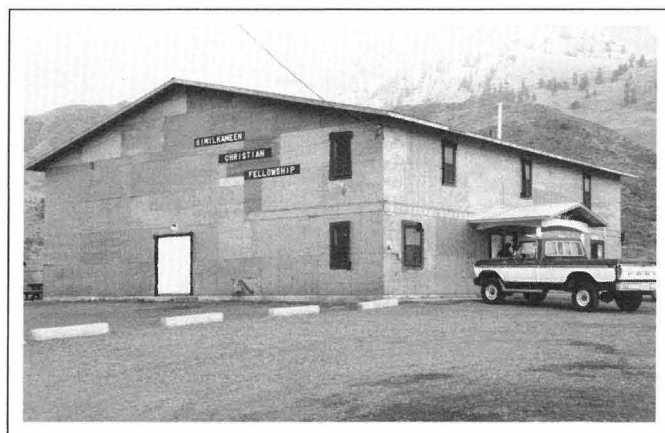
In January, 1982 a group of believers in Penticton were interested in starting a MB church. At that time there was an Associated Gospel Church in the town without a pastor. It was small group. A number from that group decided to join the MBs in forming a new church. The Board of Church Extension met with the two groups and formed a steering committee to represent both groups.

On February 26, 1982, after the group had been meeting for prayer meetings, they decided to join the MB conference. On March 7 the group met for its first joint Sunday morning service in the Grace Gospel Church. In June, 1982 the congregation was accepted into the B.C. MB Conference.

The Grace Gospel Church (AGC) was formed in Penticton in 1957. The AGC conference gave their blessing to the new MB church.

Present membership is 60.

Pastor: David Esau



**Similkameen Christian Fellowship**  
**Keremeos, British Columbia**  
**V0X 1N0**

The Similkameen Christian Fellowship began as the Cawston Christian Fellowship in the spring of 1982. At that time the fellowship baptized four people into membership.

The fellowship met in a rented Community Hall until November 8, 1987 when they dedicated their new church building. This has been the highlight of the congregation's history. This building is presently still being completed.

The small congregation is endeavoring to carry a full program of Bible studies, midweek activities, seniors programs and Sunday school.

Present membership is 36.

Pastor: Don Bodden



**The Northwest Songfest, held in Prince George, B.C. in the late 1970s, brought many northern MB churches together for fellowship.**

# MANITOBA: a church with a wide-ranging vision

It all began in Manitoba 100 years ago when a concerned Minnesota group of Mennonite Brethren sent Heinrich Voth and David Dyck to Manitoba to preach the Good News of new life in Christ.

Manitoba, a land with rich geographical, economic and cultural diversity, became the birth place of the Mennonite Brethren church in Canada.

Winkler, founded originally as the Burwalde MB Church, became the heart of the Manitoba conference quickly. In 1897, the church had grown sufficiently that a new building was erected in Winkler. In 1930 it was enlarged and in 1987 a mega-church, seating 1000 persons was erected.

But there was more to the Winkler congregation than just building a big church—it also was active in church planting. The Grossweide church, near the town of Horndean, largely composed of former members of the Sommerfeld and Old Colony Mennonites, reached a membership of 174 before beginning the decline which many other prairie churches have experienced as well.

Winnipeg, a city with the largest concentration of Mennonite Brethren congregations (17 churches) anywhere in North America, was unique from the beginning. The process of urbanization among MBs, which gained momentum in the 1950s, had long already been underway in Manitoba.

As early as 1907 groups were meeting in homes for worship, nurture and prayer. A small chapel was purchased. By 1913 a city missionary couple had been appointed.

But it was the wave of Russian immigration in the 1920s that gave momentum to church planting in Winnipeg and all over southern Manitoba. In 1924 there were 380 members in Manitoba. Between the years 1924 and 1930 the number of churches rose from two to 14. By 1945 the membership stood at 2,250.

Concern for the propagation of the gospel and the teaching of the faith resulted in Winkler Bible Institute (1925), Mennonite Brethren Collegiate Institute (1945), Mennonite Brethren Bible College (1944) being formed. Also, the Christian Press, founded in 1923, promoted Christian publishing and growth in matters of faith.

But there is more to Manitoba than merely the past. The active church planting program is very close to the heart of the church. Six northern churches—Leaf Rapids, Thompson, Snow

Lake, Flin Flon, Cranberry Portage and The Pas, together with Simonhouse Bible Camp, have been planted in the recent past. Ethnic ministries to the Portuguese, Spanish, French and Chinese are now in place. A ministry to the Native community is planned. An inner-city congregation and full-time counselling service helps round out the ministry.

Through MB Communications, the gospel goes to Russia, to High and Low German speaking people, to youth (Spin 180) and through television to many homes across Canada.

Manitoba is a very diverse province. A band of farmland stretches across the south. Here the solid lifestyle and routine of farming brings stability to the church. Across the northern half of the province water, trees and rocks prevail. Here the gospel is on the frontier helping rugged individuals find peace in Christ. And in the city of Winnipeg, where two-thirds of the population of Manitoba lives and works, the gospel penetrates the rich cultural mosaic of the population building a strong church to the glory of God.

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## 1888 First Mennonite Brethren congregation at Burwalde (later Winkler)

|      |               |
|------|---------------|
| 1945 | 2,247 members |
| 1967 | 4,263 members |
| 1987 | 5,768 members |

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Ground-breaking of the Elmwood MB Church in late fall, 1954



# C.N. Hiebert: North American travelling statesman

He was a man of slight build, winning greyish eyes, kind face, crippled arm, refined manners, delightful sense of humour, fabulous memory of people and an abundant supply of personal magnetism. His fascinating personality and captivating gift as a storyteller attracted all age groups.

Cornelius N. Hiebert was born on March 24, 1881 at Bingham Lake, Minnesota. At the age of 14 he found salvation and peace with God in John 14:27. He was baptized, by elder Heinrich Voth, into the Carson MB Church in Minnesota.

In 1903 there was a teacher shortage in North Dakota and so despite the fact that he had only completed the seventh grade he was granted a teaching permit.

Later, at age 23, while doing farm work, the Spirit spoke to him in a special way. Right then and there, beside the cultivator, he consecrated his life to God. "Lord, I am willing to do whatever you want me to do. If I can't get the education to be a preacher, I am willing to be a Bible colporteur and go from door to door to speak with people about their soul's salvation."

Cornelius immediately made good on his promise. His father bought some Bibles for him and allowed him the use of horse and buggy to begin colportage work. He began preaching wherever there were open doors, travelling through various states.

While staying at the home of David Harms in Oklahoma he met and fell in love with Tina Harms. They were married at the Harms' home in 1908. This marriage was blessed with seven children. But there was also the pain of four children who died in infancy.



In 1919 the Hieberts went to Reedley, California. Here Cornelius studied at Biola University with noted theologian R.A. Torrey.

Following his studies the family returned to Saskatchewan, where Cornelius had been ministering prior to his study time at Reedley. Here he served as an evangelist for the MB conference.

In 1925 the conference asked him to take over the city mission work in Winnipeg. The immigration of Mennonites from Russia, at this time, had led to rapid growth and the development of a number of churches. He worked in Winnipeg for 17 fruitful years. He founded Winnipeg's first two Mennonite Brethren churches; the North End church (now Elmwood) and the South End church (now Central). During the stay in Winnipeg he travelled widely to collect money and clothing for the refugees who had come to Winnipeg,

out of the suffering in Russia.

In 1941 the Hieberts moved to Hillsboro, Kansas. And in 1941 his wife, Tina, passed away suddenly. Cornelius returned to Saskatchewan. In 1943 he married Helen Harms, Tina's sister, in Brotherfield.

Hiebert continued to serve in Saskatchewan until 1948 when MCC called him to serve in Paraguay. For two years the Hieberts "walked or drove with oxen from village to village and from house to house, comforting, preaching, and helping along financially with money received from friends in the United States and Canada".

After returning to the United States and reporting on the work in South America, the Hieberts were called to Germany. In 1952 the MB conference sent them to work with refugee Mennonite families in Huemerich, at the MCC headquarters. Initially the work consisted of house visitation and meetings. Then Sunday school and church services were begun. The Hiebert's continued to help with clothing distribution and spiritual counselling for the ever-increasing number of refugees. As the work grew a community hall was rented for services. This was the beginning of the Neuwied MB Church.

In 1955 the Hieberts moved back to Reedley for retirement. Here their children and grandchildren found the warmth and hospitality that only loving parents are capable of communicating.

Cornelius N. Hiebert's life and ministry were characterized by a caring and concern for ministering to the whole person. However his primary concern, amongst a symphony of service, was "how to lead people to Christ".

# MANITOBA

## The north



**Neighbourhood Life Church**  
324 Ross Avenue  
The Pas, Manitoba  
R9A 1L6

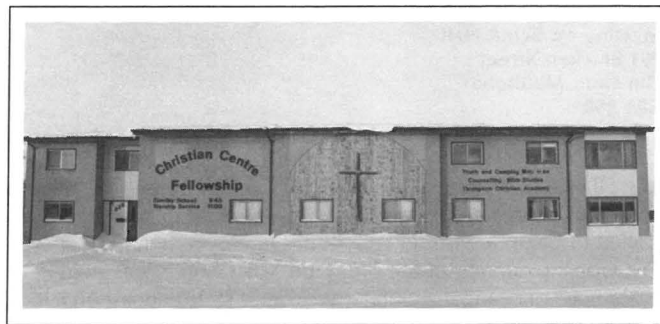
Neighbourhood Life began in 1970 with the introduction of Christian Day Camps and community-centred Bible studies. This project was initiated by the Home Missions committee of the Manitoba MB Church.

The Pas is a northern lumber town with a large native population. In 1971, the small group worshipping there held regular Friday night family fellowship evenings. Other activities were family camp and a Sunday evening worship service.

The group organized as an MB church in 1972, with two members. In 1973 a church office and counselling centre were opened and the congregation began having Sunday school and other community oriented programs. In 1974 the present location of the fellowship was established—a Christian store front with a coffee lounge and worship centre.

Present membership is 18.

Pastor: Ernie Bergen



**Christian Centre Fellowship**  
328 Thompson Drive North  
Thompson, Manitoba  
R8N 0C4

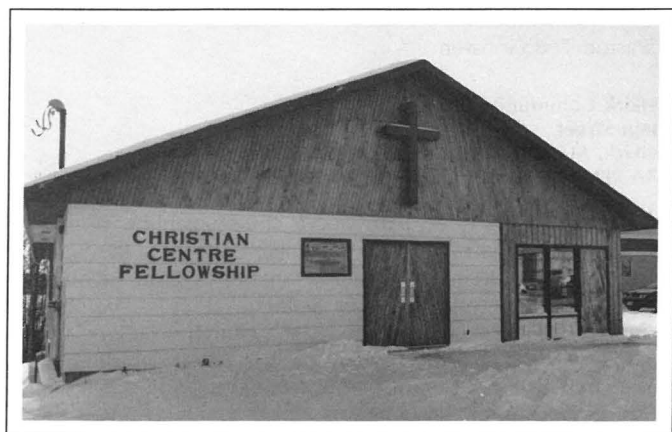
As early as 1968 there was interest in beginning a MB Church in Thompson. However, there were already many evangelical churches in this northern centre, most notably a United Mennonite fellowship. Initially, the congregation wished to carry a dual affiliation, however, this did not work out.

It was not until 1978 that the MBs again considered the work here. A number of Christian Day Camps had been carried out in previous years and so in October, 1979 services were started in Thompson. In October, 1981 the group held a baptism and chartering service in rented facilities.

Recently the congregation has completed the renovation of an apartment building which they purchased. In it is room for the pastor's living quarters, an office and a roomy sanctuary.

Present membership is 21.

Pastor: Gary Sawatsky



**Snow Lake Christian Centre Fellowship**  
Snow Lake, Manitoba  
R0B 1M0

Snow Lake is a mining town in northern Manitoba. In the fall of 1974 the Christian Centre came into being on the initiative of the Board of Missions and Church Extension. Since 1970 the MB conference had sponsored the Christian Day Camp program in Snow Lake for a week each summer. This exposed the community to the gospel and opened the possibility for a new church.

By October the church was meeting regularly in rented space. In 1976 more space was needed so the basement of the building was rented.

In the spring of 1979 the group was officially chartered as a church and in June, 1979 officially accepted into the Manitoba conference. At that time the conference also pledged support for the congregation to begin building a new church building. By December 2, 1979 the main floor was completed and the first service was held in the building.

Present membership is 41.

Pastor: John Klassen

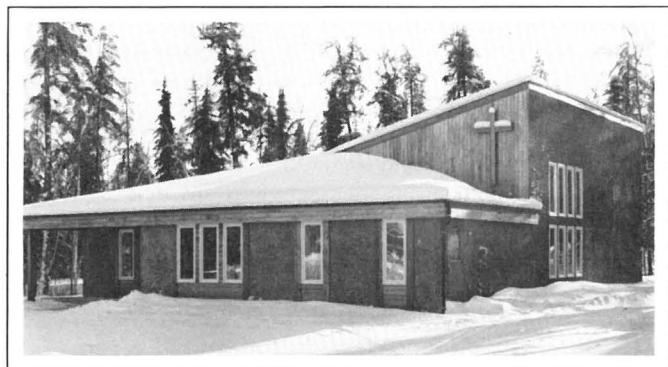
**Flin Flon Mennonite Brethren Church****Meeting at: Scout Hall****201 Bracken Street****Flin Flon, Manitoba****R8A 0S2**

In the early 1980's the Board of Missions and Church Extension saw Flin Flon, Manitoba as a prospective community to begin a church planting venture. In 1984 a pastoral couple was commissioned to begin a work in Flin Flon. On November 11, 1984 the first worship service of the Flin Flon MB Church was held.

Methods of evangelization range from a TV broadcast on a local station, to video parties and fishing. Average Sunday attendance is 22, including children. The church is very involved in community activities and many non-christian friends attend Sunday services.

In the fall of 1985 the congregation held its first baptism, baptizing two in a nearby lake. As yet the congregation does not have a charter.

Pastor: Dale Warkentin

**Leaf Rapids Christian Fellowship Group****Leaf Rapids, Manitoba****R0B 1W0**

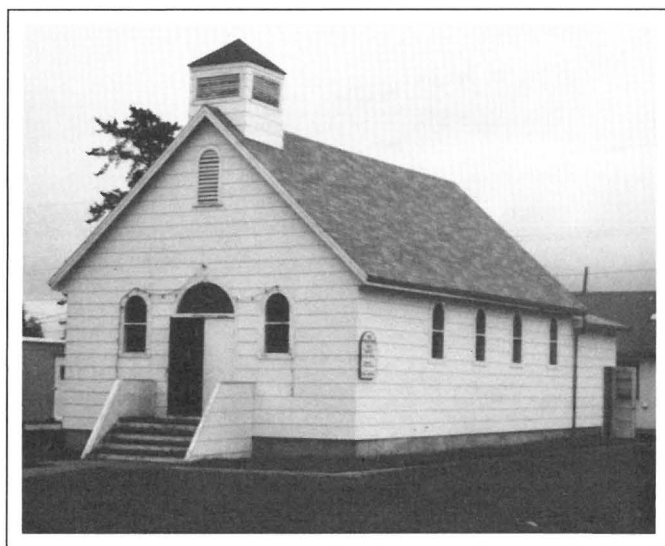
Leaf Rapids is a northern mining community, formed in 1970 when a mine came into operation. In February, 1972 the Board of Missions and Church Extension began exploring the possibility of planting a church in the community. On August 13, 1972 regular church services and weekly home Bible studies were conducted. The denominational background of this congregation was diverse and not all of the attenders wished to become members of the fellowship. However, in January 1974, 22 people became members and later that year the group became part of the MB conference.

In the summer of 1974 the group rented facilities in the Town Centre Mall. This location was ideal as a counselling, drop-in and office centre for the church.

In 1981 the congregation constructed a chapel. In that same year there was a lay-off at the mine resulting in a drastic decline in membership. The church has been in a constant state of flux.

Present membership is 6.

Pastor: John Hiebert

**Grace Church of the Mennonite Brethren****Cranberry Portage, Manitoba****R0B 0H0**

This church had its genesis, in the early 1930's, as a Presbyterian church. However, the community was not flourishing and therefore neither did the church.

In 1966 the first MB family settled in the town. Gerhard Penner, a school teacher, wanted a strong evangelical church to begin in the community. A fellowship began and grew. However, the population of the town was transient and a stable membership was difficult to retain.

Then, in 1977, the Manitoba MB Church Extension program, Christian Day Camps, included Cranberry Portage on its itinerary. Also, Simonhouse Bible Camp, 22 miles from Cranberry Portage, was purchased. Now it became viable to begin a MB congregation in the town.

The Presbyterian congregation willingly accepted an offer to change the denominational affiliation. On October 22, 1978 the denomination change was complete and in 1982 the congregation received its charter.

Present membership is 14.

Pastor: Ted Goossen

**Selkirk Community Church****Main Street****Selkirk, Manitoba****R1A 2J2**

For about 20 years the plans for a church-planting venture in Selkirk had been on hold. The financial resources of the Board of Missions and Church Extension and the emphasis on the northern churches diverted attention from Selkirk.

In June, 1983 the challenge to plant a church in Selkirk was accepted. In January, 1984 the church was born, with the help of sister churches from Winnipeg. Growth has been slow but steady. A spirit of optimism is evident.

In 1988 this congregation is celebrating the purchase of a permanent facility for worship.

Present membership is 11.

Pastor: Art Kliever

## The west



**Boissevain Mennonite Brethren Church**  
700 Aikman Street South  
Boissevain, Manitoba  
R0K 0E0

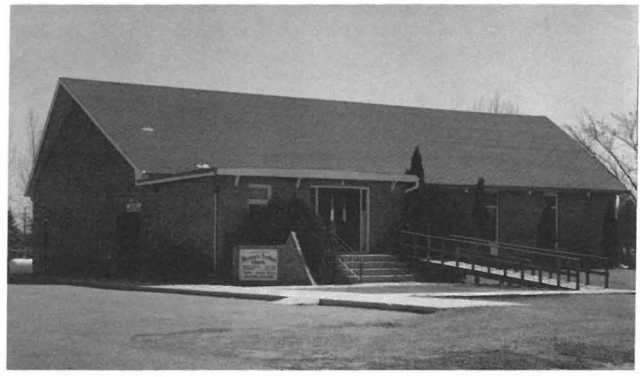
In 1928 Mennonite settlers in the Boissevain area began meeting for worship. The 35 people who met regularly were of varying backgrounds; General Conference, Allianz and Mennonite Brethren. In 1928 the group called itself the Whitewater MB Church.

In 1930 the meetings with the other Mennonites discontinued. The General Conference people organized their own church and the Allianz joined the MB congregation.

For 14 years the group met in the Strathallen school. When Bible conferences were held the little school was crowded to overflowing. Since the group was widely scattered it was not easy to decide where to build a church building. In 1944 it was agreed that the building should be constructed in Boissevain. In 1967 a new church was built where the congregation presently worships.

Present membership is 125.

Pastor: Wally Kroeker



**Lakeview Mennonite Brethren Church**  
Hamilton and Government Road  
Killarney, Manitoba  
R0K 1G0

In 1926-27 Mennonite settlers began to settle around Lena and Holmfield, close to Killarney. At first they attended the local United Church but could not understand the services. Subsequently, they rented a school and held German services. Initially, the various Mennonite groups met together. As the numbers grew the groups began to form their own congregations.

On March 10, 1928 the MB members organized the Holmfield MB Church. The membership was widely scattered and in 1938 they divided into two congregations, the Lena MB Church and the Holmfield church.

During the Second World War many members moved away from the Holmfield area. By 1945 the remaining members joined the Lena church. The building became too small to accommodate the steady growth. After much discussion it was decided to build in Killarney. In 1967 a building was constructed.

Present membership is 100.

Pastor: Walter Janzen



**Richmond Park Mennonite Brethren Church**  
1525-26th Street  
Brandon, Manitoba  
R7B 3C2

In 1954 delegates from Justice and Griswold requested Winnipeg City Mission Committee to begin a church in Brandon. The committee asked Abram J. Froese to begin gathering with those working in Brandon. The group became known as the Gospel Light Mission. Services soon became too crowded to be held in homes and so the group moved to the Hillside Mission Hall.

In 1960 the Brandon Gospel Light Mission became the Brandon MB Church with 26 members. In 1965 this congregation became the first Manitoba mission church to become self-supporting.

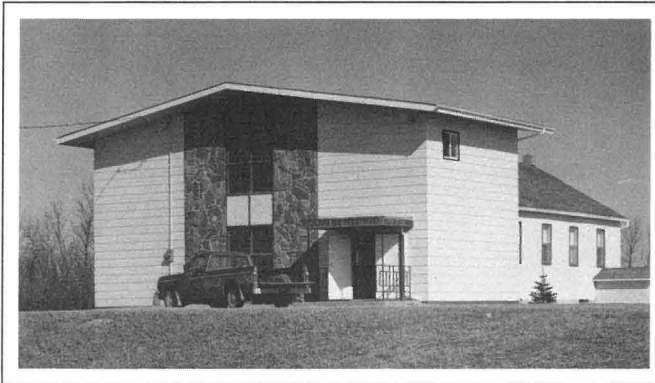
In 1973 the Alexander congregation dissolved and many of its members joined the Brandon church. In 1977 a large new building was constructed and the congregation was renamed the Richmond Park MB Church.

Present membership is 198.

Pastor: David Bergen



## The south



**Justice Mennonite Brethren Church**  
R.R. 2  
Minnedosa, Manitoba  
R0J 1E0

As early as 1926 Russian immigrant farmers came to the area of Justice. In 1927 several of these settlers began meeting for worship on Sundays. In January, 1930 the church was formally organized as the Brookdale MB Church.

For the first 10 years services were held in the homes of church members. From 1940-43 the congregation met in a rented house in the Moore Park district. Then in 1944 the first church structure was erected. This small building was located in the Justice district and so the fellowship was renamed the Justice MB Church. For nine years the congregation worshipped in this facility and it grew steadily. In 1953 a new larger church was built, one mile east of the old one.

Present membership is 59.

Pastor: Gerald Peters



**The small building to the left is the first MB church facility in Canada. It was constructed in Burwalde. Next to it is the new Winkler church.**



**Carman Gospel Light Church**  
245 1st Street North West  
Carman, Manitoba  
R0G 0J0

The Carman Gospel Light Church is the result of a church planting effort by the Board of Missions and Church Extension. In early 1956 a small group began to meet in a rented facility. On April 26, 1956 the congregation formally organized as the Carman Gospel Light Mission.

In April, 1956 land was purchased and a building program launched. In December, 1956 the basement of the structure was dedicated and by the fall of 1958 the entire structure was completed.

Due to overcrowding in the old facility, a new building was begun in the fall of 1978. On May 20, 1979 this new facility was dedicated. Since that time attendance and membership has increased steadily.

Present membership is 134.

Pastor: Mark Johnson

**South Park Mennonite Brethren Church**  
Meeting at: Elim Bible Institute  
Altona, Manitoba  
R0G 0B0

In the spring of 1980 Manitoba Missions and Church Extension encouraged three families in Altona, who had a vision for an MB church, to carry on with that vision. These three families came out of the Horndean MB Church. On March 1, 1981 the congregation held its inaugural service in a high school multi-purpose room.

On August 8, 1981 a full-time pastor couple came to the church. On November 29, 1981 the congregation received its charter from the Manitoba MB conference with 15 members. February 27, 1982 saw the church accepted into the Manitoba MB conference. Since then steady growth has marked this congregation.

A deposit has been made on a lot for a church building. The congregation anticipates the time when they will construct their own church facility.

Present membership is 70.

Pastor: Michael Young



**Winkler Mennonite Brethren Church**  
**Pembina Avenue and Pineview Drive**  
**Winkler, Manitoba**  
**R0G 2X0**

The North American MB Conference, in 1883, delegated Heinrich Voth of Minnesota to visit Mennonite communities in southern Manitoba. In December, 1884 Voth arrived in Hoffnungsfield, one mile south-west of present-day Winkler. He conducted services in local homes and schools, as well as making visitations. He met considerable opposition but his labours began to bear fruit. By 1888 enough interest had been generated and the first MB Church in Canada was begun.

In 1889 money was collected to construct a building at Burwalde. In 1897, with members moving into the growing community of Winkler, the congregation moved into the town.

The Winkler congregation, during the 1920-30's, sent many leaders to aid the fledgling fellowships in Winnipeg. The congregation has sponsored many missionaries overseas as well.

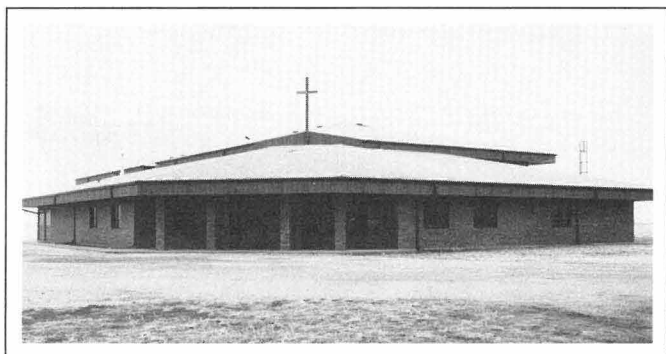
In 1987 construction was begun on a new facility. In early 1988 the structure was completed and the congregation began meeting in it.

Present membership is 441.

Pastor(s): Herb Van Bergen, Wally Klassen



**Sunday school attenders in 1916 at the Winnipeg Chapel, the first gathering of Mennonite Brethren in Winnipeg.**



**Elm Creek Mennonite Brethren Church**  
**Elm Creek, Manitoba**  
**R0G 0N0**

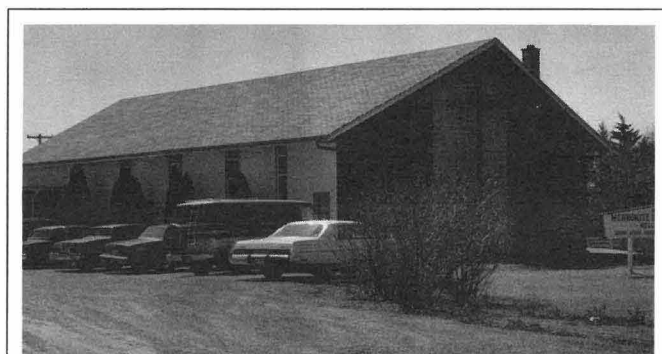
The first settlers to this area came in 1925. Initially, approximately 30 families gathered to worship together in a school building. These families were of diverse denominational persuasion and organization was difficult. Four years later, in March, 1929 in affiliation with Winkler, a Mennonite Brethren church was formed with 23 members.

In January, 1931 the church became independant from Winkler and was called the Elm Creek MB Church. In 1937 they constructed their own church building, which was enlarged in 1944. Then in 1950, a new structure was erected and in 1964 this building was enlarged as well. After much discussion, it was decided to move the meeting place into the town of Elm Creek. In the early 1980's land was purchased and by the mid-1980's church construction was begun and completed.

This active rural church is known for an enthusiastic youth group and for the many it sends to Bible institutes.

Present membership is 188.

Pastor: pastoral vacancy



**Manitou Mennonite Brethren Church**  
**Manitou, Manitoba**  
**R0G 1G0**

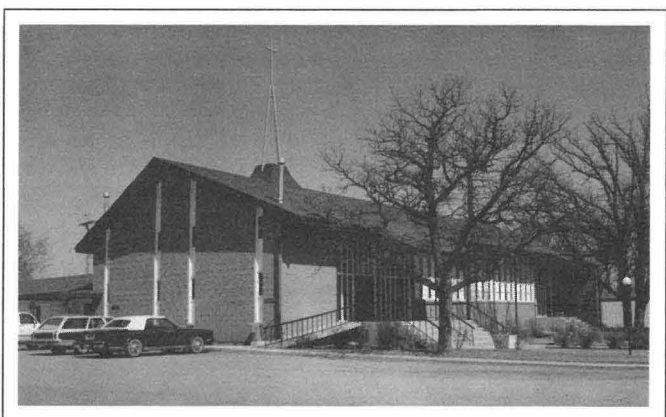
In 1926 the first immigrants arrived in Manitou. On June 6, 1927 the Manitou MB Church was formed. Thirty members joined that first year. Due to transportation difficulties, especially during the winter months, the church was divided into three groups, each in its own locality. They worshipped corporately only once a month.

In 1931, a small church was built on the outskirts of town to bring stability to the fellowship. At this time a stable also had to be built to house the horses.

In 1950 a new church was built and the old one was sold to the Holmfield MB Church. As the membership increased it became evident that a larger building was needed. In 1968 a new sanctuary was erected.

Present membership is 123.

Pastor: George Toews



**Morden Mennonite Brethren Church**  
**831 Thornhill Avenue**  
**Morden, Manitoba**  
**R0G 1J0**

Between the years of 1923 and 1930 the Mennonites in Morden worshipped in the local Lutheran church because its services were in German. D.D. Toews, a member of Winkler MB Church, worked to persuade this group to gather separately to worship. So in 1930 they rented Alexander Hall (2nd floor) and officially organized the Morden MB Church, with D.D. Toews as leader. For the first years ministers came from nearby Winkler to serve this congregation.

In 1933 the church bought a small hall for \$800. In 1946 a new church was built and dedicated on September 27. The congregation was instrumental in the establishing of a home for the elderly, Tabor Home, which was dedicated to God in 1952.

To accommodate continued growth, land was purchased and in 1969 the present church facility was dedicated to God.

Present membership is 209.

Pastor(s): Russel Toews, Ross Penner



**Community Fellowship Church**  
**Newton, Manitoba**  
**R0H 0X0**

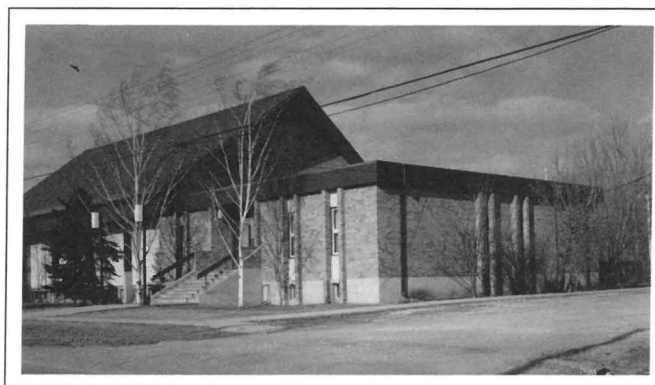
The Newton MB Church was officially organized November 25, 1928 with 24 charter members. Meetings were held in the East Curtis school until 1939. In 1938 the decision to build a church was made and the first church was dedicated on September 29, 1939. In the spring of 1940 the building burned to the ground. For some time following, meetings were held in the Salem United Church. While using this church facility, services had to be held in English—this was due to the war effort.

In fall of 1940 the building was partially rebuilt and by 1946 the rebuilding process was complete.

In July, 1978 the church celebrated its 50th anniversary with two days of festivals. That year it was also decided to build a new and larger facility. At that time the name was changed to Community Fellowship Church, Mennonite Brethren, to convey openness to the community.

Present membership is 185.

Pastor(s): Jake Penner, Grant Gasser



**Niverville Mennonite Brethren Church**  
**62 4th Avenue South**  
**Niverville, Manitoba**  
**R0A 1E0**

The mid-1920's saw a number of Mennonite settlements develop in the Niverville area. During this time the General Conference Mennonite and the MBs met for joint worship services in the Niverville United Church. However, since the farms and settlements were so scattered, the MBs began meeting in individual homes for fellowship.

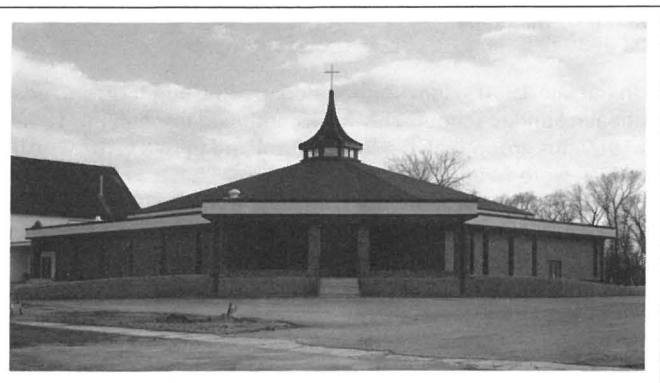
On May 19, 1929 the Niverville MB Church was formed with 18 initial members. The congregation began to increase steadily.

The congregation has always been active in outreach to its surrounding area, sending out groups to serve in music and testimony. Many members have also been active in overseas missions. Music has always been important and joint choir fests were frequent, with Steinbach and Arnaud.

A number of renovations and building projects have led to the present structure, completed on October 26, 1970.

Present membership is 241.

Pastor(s): Henry Regier, Peter J. Doerksen



**Steinbach Mennonite Brethren Church**  
**2nd Street and Lumber Avenue**  
**Steinbach, Manitoba**  
**R0A 2A0**

The Steinbach MB Church was organized in 1927. Those involved pooled their financial resources and bought a small school in which they held their first meetings. In 1942 this building was inadequate for the growing congregation. A lot was purchased but since it was during war-time they were not allowed to build a sanctuary. They were, however, allowed to complete a basement, which they did. The group worshipped in the basement until 1947 when the main sanctuary was completed.

Almost immediately the new building was inadequate for the expanding Sunday school. In 1957 the congregation built an addition onto the front of the main building. In 1970 another large addition was built onto the rear of the church to add more space.

Finally, on April 12, 1987 the first service was held in a beautiful new structure, which was completed earlier that year.

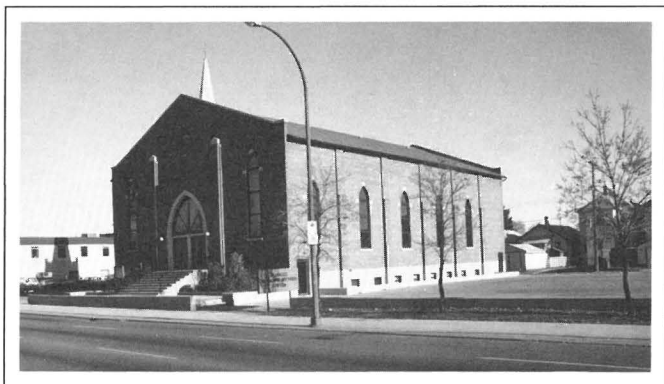
Present membership is 285.

Pastor: F.W. Lehman



# MANITOBA

## The city of Winnipeg



**Elmwood Mennonite Brethren Church**  
**145 Henderson Highway**  
**Winnipeg, Manitoba**  
**R2L 1L4**

The Elmwood MB Church developed out of the North End church of Winnipeg. As early as 1907, German immigrants met in homes for prayer and fellowship. When these immigrants learned that there was an MB Church in Winkler, they contacted that church and requested assistance. The Winkler church came to their aid by sending out its ministers to visit the group four times annually.

The 1920's witnessed another large influx of immigrants from Russia. The church sought to assist these immigrants with food, clothing and shelter. By 1936 the congregation was too much for one minister to handle. The conference asked C.N. Hiebert to devote all his time to the city mission while the church elected Franz Isaac as leading minister.

In 1951 the congregation needed a larger facility. A plot of land was donated by a church member in the Elmwood area of Winnipeg. Construction was begun and on February 7, 1954 the building was dedicated. In 1961 an education wing was completed.

Present membership is 425.

Pastor(s): Jay Neufeld, Doug Enns

**Chinese Mennonite Brethren Church**  
**Meeting at: Cornerstone Christian Fellowship**  
**Winnipeg, Manitoba**  
**R3E 0L7**

In 1983 this fellowship began with the help of MCC and several Mennonite denominations. It was to meet the needs of Vietnamese refugees and the Chinese community. Under the leadership of James Young (Hoc Doung), of the River East MB Church, the group grew. In August, 1986 they decided to split, with the Vietnamese forming the Vietnamese Mennonite Church and the Chinese forming the Chinese MB Church.

February 15, 1987 saw the formal chartering service of the Chinese MB Church. The group now meets on Sunday afternoons in the same facility used by the Cornerstone Christian Fellowship.

Present membership is 35.

Pastor: James Young

**Transcona Community Church**  
**Meeting at: The Palliser Furniture Company**  
**Pandora, Avenue**  
**Transcona, Manitoba**  
**R2C 0V6**

The Board of Missions and Church Extension, in 1983, challenged churches with memberships of 200 or more to plant a church. As a result of this challenge the Transcona church was established.

Prior to this, in the mid-1960's, Daily Vacation Bible Schools held in the Transcona area had been very successful. The parents in the area requested a year round program and a church.

By 1979-80 it was apparent that Transcona (Winnipeg East) needed a church. Four neighbouring churches, North Kildonan, Elmwood, McIvor and River East, joined forces and formed a steering committee. In January, 1983, after a year of planning, the inaugural service was held in a school auditorium. In June, 1983 the church celebrated a baptism and its chartering service. In recent times the congregation has come on hard times and is attempting to refocus its ministry.

Present membership is 35.

Pastor: John Walker



**River East Mennonite Brethren Church**  
**755 McLeod Avenue**  
**Winnipeg, Manitoba**  
**R2K 0B8**

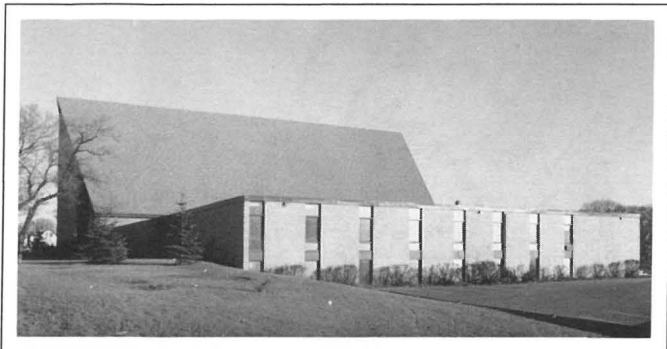
In the late 1940's, the North Kildonan MB Church organized an outreach Sunday school. This work continued through the 1950's. In 1960 this group rented a local school and in two years worship services were being held.

On January 6, 1963 approximately 60 members organized themselves into a church called the River East MB Church.

By the fall of 1964 the congregation had erected a sanctuary. Since this was the first completely English congregation in this area of the city it grew rapidly. The congregation is presently in discussion whether to divide into two congregations or to construct a new, large facility to accommodate its growth.

Present membership is 354.

Pastor(s): Norm Neufeld, Keith Poysti



**Portage Avenue Mennonite Brethren Church**  
**1420 Portage Avenue**  
**Winnipeg, Manitoba**  
**R3G 0W2**

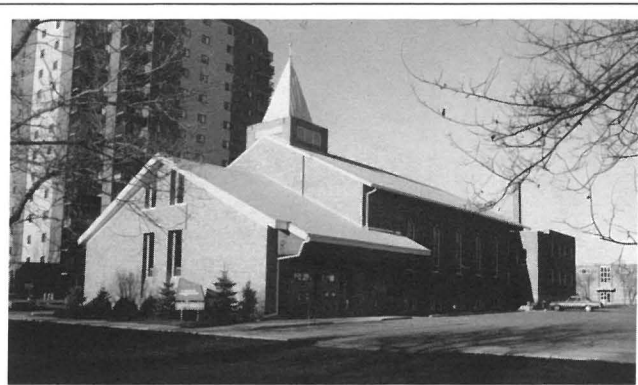
For much of the early 1920's, the Winnipeg North End chapel was the only MB Church in Winnipeg. However, as the population of the city began to spread out it became increasingly difficult to make the trek to the north end. The group began to meet in the south end of Winnipeg. In 1933 a building on Ross Avenue was purchased for \$2000. Three years later the congregation as officially accepted into the MB conference.

In 1940 the group, known as the South End MB Church, had grown and purchased a Pentecostal church on William Avenue. By 1959 the congregation had grown to 600 members and needed larger facilities. A lot was purchased on Portage Avenue and after intense discussions whether building was necessary, the new church was built. The new fellowship was named the Portage Avenue MB Church.

This church has initiated two other fellowships. In the early 1960's the Brooklands church was begun and, in 1980, 55 members met to organize the Westwood church.

Present membership is 624.

Pastor(s): Albert Baerg, Tom Koop, Abram J. Neufeld



**North Kildonan Mennonite Brethren Church**  
**217 Kingsford Avenue**  
**Winnipeg, Manitoba**  
**R2G 0J4**

Previous to 1928 the Mennonite community in the North Kildonan municipality of Winnipeg had met together, regardless of denomination. In November, 1928, 30 MBs gathered together to form the North Kildonan MB Church. In 1938 the congregation became independent.

The church has grown steadily since. The largest increase came with an influx of South American Mennonites as well as Russian resettlers.

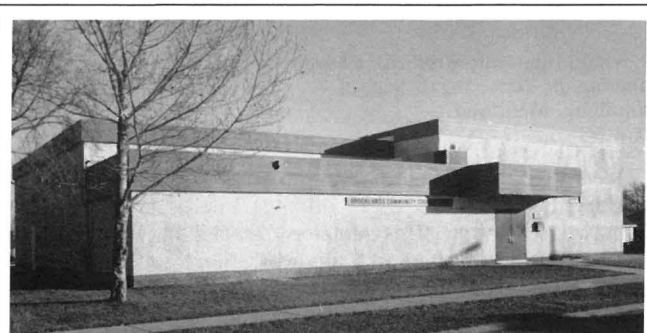
In 1944 an extension Sunday school was begun in a local school and in 1964 this became the River East MB Church.

The first building on Edison Avenue was enlarged five times until 1957 when a new site was acquired and a larger building constructed. Once again, in 1976, the congregation found itself overcrowded. Language difficulties made the problem more pressing and a new, larger facility was constructed.

In the same year that North Kildonan's new facilities were completed the new McIvor congregation, which grew out of the North Kildonan congregation, also completed a new sanctuary.

Present membership is 546.

Pastor(s): John Epp, Ron Braun



**Brooklands Community Church**  
**44 Tentler Street**  
**Winnipeg, Manitoba**  
**R2R 0L1**

In the 1920's a number of Mennonites settled in the Brooklands area, then the outskirts of Winnipeg. Abram Peters from the North End Chapel came to minister to them every second Sunday. However, with his death the services were discontinued.

In the 1950's the South End church began a mission Sunday school in the Brooklands area. Then in 1957 the Home Missions Committee took over the work, with the continued aid of the South End members. (In 1961 the South End church became the Portage Avenue MB Church and the congregation continued to work in Brooklands.)

In 1963 the Home Missions Committee appointed a pastoral couple to lead the group, which began meeting in a local school. In 1964 the church organized with 12 members and a year later its first baptism was held, with two candidates.

In 1965 a chapel was built and in 1983 the structure was enlarged.

Present membership is 97.

Pastor: Neil Block



**Mclvor Mennonite Brethren Church**  
**200 Mclvor Avenue**  
**Winnipeg, Manitoba**  
**R2G 1V2**

The Mclvor MB Church has its roots in the North Kildonan MB Church. In April, 1974 it was decided that the North Kildonan congregation would build a new church in order to alleviate crowded circumstances. On August 19, 1975 a building project was begun and about 11 months later the building was completed. On October 10, 1976 the congregation dedicated the new structure to the Lord. The fellowship began with 248 charter members.

The church quickly organized itself and has continued to experience growth. It is presently studying options to alleviate overcrowding.

Present membership is 383.

Pastor: Allan Labun,

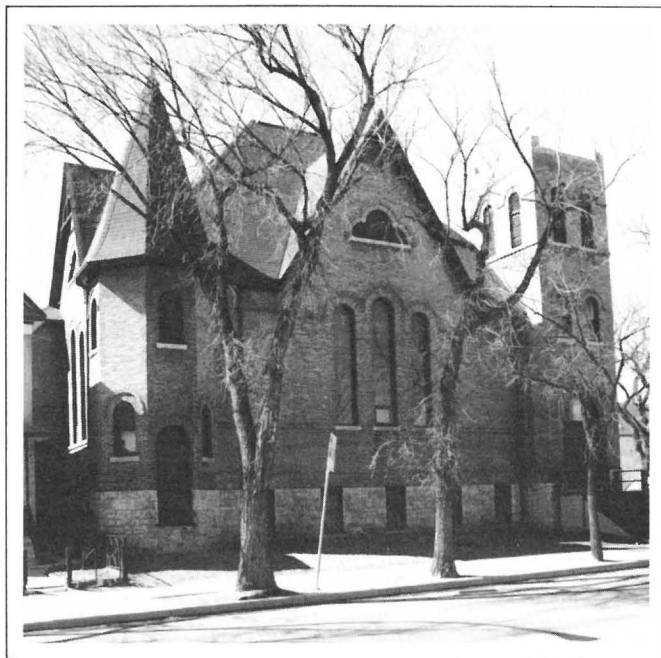
**Valley Gardens Community Church**  
**Meeting at: Valley Gardens Junior High School**  
**Winnipeg, Manitoba**  
**R2K 4G5**

At an August, 1983 meeting of the Board of Missions and Church Extension, it was decided to call a meeting of all interested people in starting a church in the Valley Gardens area of Winnipeg. The meeting was well-attended. It was decided to begin a community church with outreach as its purpose. It was also decided to place the leadership of this congregation as much as possible into the hands of the local people.

For three months the group met for Bible studies in a home. Then, in January, 1984 the first public worship service was held in a local school. There was encouragement from nearby churches, especially the River East congregation. Land has been purchased and the church anticipates the day when ground-breaking will occur for their own church facility.

Present membership is 50.

Pastor: Clarence Braun



**Winnipeg Central Mennonite Brethren Church**  
**520 William Avenue**  
**Winnipeg, Manitoba**  
**R3A 0J8**

During the early 1920's in Winnipeg, there was only one MB church, the North End Chapel. In October, 1936 the South End church was formed. They purchased a small building on Ross Avenue. Soon this building became inadequate and in May, 1940 a large Wesleyan church was purchased from a Pentecostal congregation.

In February, 1959 it was decided to build a new church on Portage Avenue. However, a large group indicated that they would rather stay in the present location. This group bought the building they were worshipping in and on September 19, 1960 formed the Central MB Church.

The Central MB Church still uses German in its services.

Present membership is 196.

Pastor: Abe Quiring

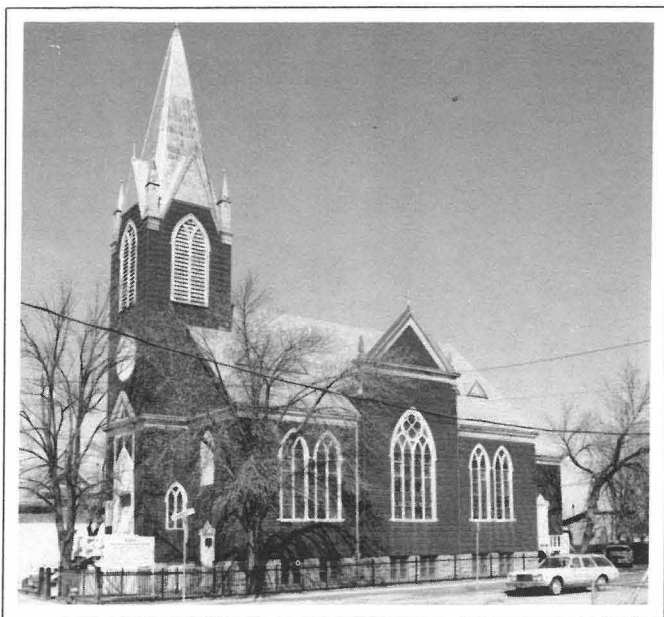
**St. Vital Mennonite Brethren Church**  
**Meeting at: Victor Wyatt School**  
**Winnipeg, Manitoba**  
**R2M 5C1**

As early as 1978 Manitoba MB Missions and Church Extension had identified the Winnipeg suburb of St. Vital as an area for possible church planting. This remained on the back burner until March, 1986 when the Fort Garry MB Church received a report on the possibility of the venture. In May, 1986 the Fort Garry congregation affirmed the recommendation to start a new church.

On October 4, 1987 the Fort Garry Church commissioned the core-group going to St. Vital and in the afternoon the St. Vital MB Church held its inaugural service. Presently the fellowship meets in a local school.

Present attendance is approximately 40.

Pastor: Albert Friesen



**Salem Mennonite Brethren Church**  
**691 Alexander Avenue**  
**Winnipeg, Manitoba**  
**R3B 1J1**

In 1965 when the Logan Gospel Light Church moved into the Alexander Avenue church, its name was changed to the Salem MB Church.

Salem is an inner-city church in a generally financially burdened neighbourhood. The work force for the mission effort has come largely from dedicated members of other city churches.

The congregation is multi-ethnic, with a colourful background, and welcomes anyone in need. A Portuguese service is conducted on Sunday afternoons in this church.

Present membership is 35.

Pastor: Arno C. Fast



**Fort Garry Mennonite Brethren Church**  
**1771 Pembina Highway**  
**Winnipeg, Manitoba**  
**R3T 2G6**

The Gospel Light Mission on Logan Avenue began as a Sunday school, Bible study and Christian clubs. Workers came from the Bible College and the South End MB Church. In 1953, morning worship services were begun, and in 1955 the first baptism was held.

In 1956 the mission became a church and was accepted into the MB conference with 26 members. In 1959 a building was bought on McMillan Avenue. The congregation was called the Ft. Rouge MB Church.

A rapid increase in membership required that a larger building be built. In 1963 a building was constructed on Pembina Highway and the congregation took the name, Fort Garry MB Church. In the early 1980's a further addition, for administration and education, was built.

The church is located near the University of Manitoba campus and attracts many students.

Present membership is 320.

Pastor(s): Dan Unrau, Craig Ginn, Salome Hiebert



**Cornerstone Christian Fellowship**  
**700 Notre Dame Avenue**  
**Winnipeg, Manitoba**  
**R3E 0L7**

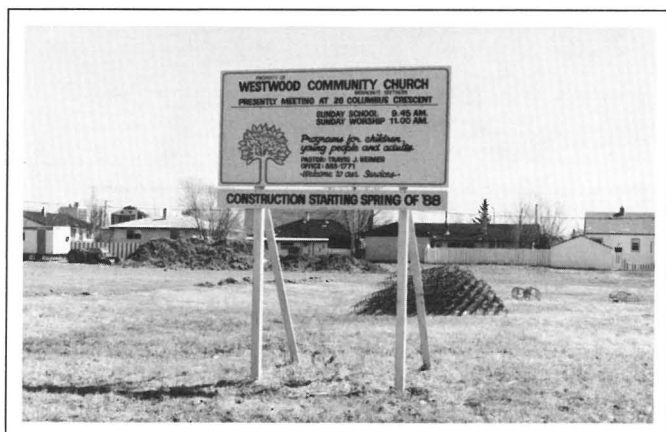
In 1970, the Manitoba Missions Board began plans for a mission to the needs of inner-city Winnipeg. In 1976, a project was proposed in the form of a Christian Resource Centre. A book display was set up and a reading lounge with counselling services was made available. Paul Patterson, a man familiar with the needs of the inner-city people, became the minister in this mission. By mid-1977 the centre was in full operation.

After a period of time away from the centre, Patterson returned in the fall of 1982. In April, 1983 the fellowship became intent on forming a church. On November 13, 1983 in a remodelled centre, the charter service was held.

Present membership is 27.

Pastor(s): Paul Patterson, Cal Wiebe





**Westwood Community Church**  
**Meeting at: Winnipeg Mennonite Elementary School**  
**26 Columbus Crescent**  
**New building: Westwood and McBey**  
**Winnipeg, Manitoba**  
**R3K 0C6**

In October, 1967 discussion first began on the possibility of beginning a church in the west end of the city. However, nothing specific transpired until October, 1978 when the Portage Avenue church met with Missions and Church Extension chairman, James Nikkel. The proposal was passed by the church and in the fall of 1978 meetings began being held in the homes of residents of Westwood.

On January 1, 1979 a communion service and farewell was held at the Portage Avenue church as over 50 members pledged to attend the new church. In that same year, in January, the fellowship became a member of the MB conference.

A tract of land has been purchased and construction on a new facility has already begun.

Present membership is 156.

Pastor(s): Travis J. Reimer, Roy Dearing

**St. Boniface Evangelical Christian Church**  
**Meeting at: 231 Kitson Street**  
**St. Boniface, Manitoba**  
**R2H 0Z4**

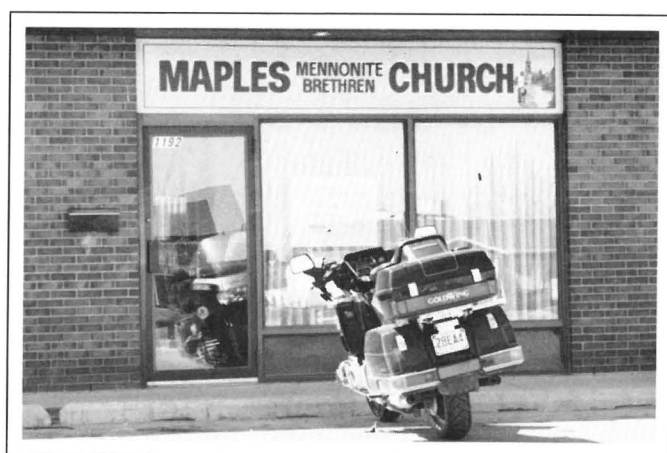
As early as 1970 the Winnipeg suburb of St. Boniface had been explored for the possibility of beginning a church there. The hindrance was the lack of workers in who knew French. Ernest Dyck, a church planter from Quebec, came to study the situation, conducting a survey of the suburb which revealed 30 to 40 percent French-speaking residents. The church would need to be bilingual.

It was not until 1981 that a bilingual worker was found. In January, 1981 the work in St. Boniface was begun. Much research and foundation work was done before starting services on January 10, 1982. An English service is held first, followed by one in the French language.

Recently a chapel building has been purchased and is being renovated.

Present membership is 40.

Pastor(s): Gerald Hintz, Henry Cullihall



**Maples Mennonite Brethren Church**  
**Meeting at: 109 Bannerman Avenue**  
**Winnipeg, Manitoba**  
**R2W 0T1**

The initial mandate to proceed with the work in the Maples was granted in June, 1979 from the Board of Missions and Church Extension. A steering committee was formed and in September, 1979 the inaugural service was held.

The work in Maples was begun by Arthur and Elsie Kliever. On March 23, 1980 the 13-member congregation was chartered. These members were the fruit of Kliever's work in the community.

Currently the congregation is meeting in a store-like setting in a small community shopping centre.

Present membership is 22.

Pastor: Gilbert Berg

**Spanish Christian Church**  
**Meeting at: Winnipeg Central Mennonite Brethren Church**  
**Winnipeg, Manitoba**  
**R2G 3X1**

The church began as a Spanish home Bible study in 1972 when Violet Wittenberg left Columbia to come to Winnipeg. She contacted believers and a Bible study group started. The work then encountered a setback as the group of believers disagreed amongst themselves and split in two.

It was not until October, 1982 that the group again began to meet as a church body. In January, 1983 Delbert Enns took over the work as leader and the group began to grow. Discipleship classes began and by October, 1985 a solid core group had taken shape. In October, 1985 the congregation received its charter and became affiliated with the Board of Missions and Church Extension. The majority of the charter membership came from Central American countries.

In February, 1988 the congregation was accepted as a member of the Manitoba MB conference.

Present membership is 35.

Pastor(s): Delbert Enns, Jaime Carter

# ONTARIO: anticipating new frontiers and ministries

It all depends on one's perspective. For anyone west of Winnipeg, Ontario is the eastern establishment; for anyone east of Quebec, Ontario is the western establishment. Allan Fotheringham, columnist for *MacLeans* magazine, who secretly probably wishes he would live in Toronto, calls Ontario, and particularly Toronto, "the province/city everyone loves to hate".

But such is not the case in the Mennonite Brethren church. Although the Ontario conference joined the Canadian conference only in 1946, its beginnings coincide, to a large extent, with the wave of immigration in the 1920s.

It was because of the good reputation of Pennsylvania Dutch Mennonites, who came to Canada in the 1780s and settled in the Markham, Waterloo and Niagara districts, that opened the door to the Russian immigration wave in the 1920s. The vast majority of Russian MBs settled in the prairie provinces. Ontario was not, initially, deluged with new numbers, as were the four western provinces.

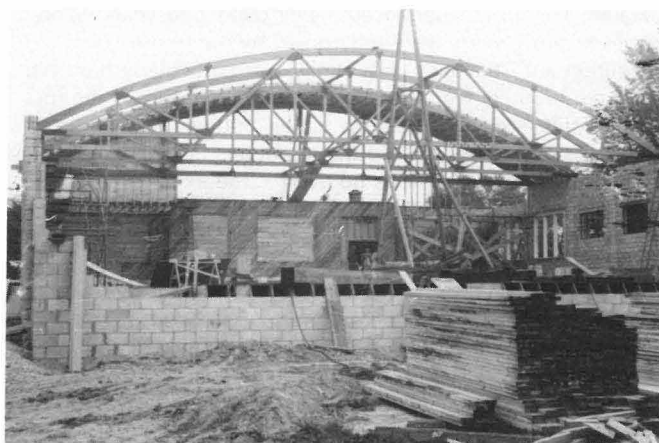
The first MB church to organize, in 1925, was in St. Jacobs, which later became the Kitchener MB Church. For many years, until the mid 1950s, Kitchener was the centre of the MB community in Ontario.

The Russian Mennonite Brethren settled in the Port Rowan and Leamington regions. In the 1930s, during the very difficult drought years on the prairies, many families, particularly from northern Saskatchewan, moved to the Niagara Peninsula, drawn to that region for its fruit farming possibilities. The Vineland congregation was organized in 1932. Under the leadership of John F. Dyck, the Virgil congregation was formed in 1937. The strong influx of MB families from western Canada swelled the membership rolls.

A Bible School (in Kitchener, 1938) and a high school (Eden Christian College, 1945) played a significant role in the growth of the MB community.

During the Second World War many families moved to St. Catharines. In 1943 the Scott Street congregation was formed. Immigration from Paraguay increased the size of the congregation so that for many years it was the largest Ontario congregation.

However, not all growth was by immigration. The Scott Street congregation had a part in planting the Fairview and Grantham congregations. Other churches divided or planted new churches. Today, the Niagara Peninsula is 10 churches strong and has almost two-thirds of the membership of the Ontario conference.



**Eden Christian College gymnasium/auditorium under construction**

Church planting is very close to the heart of this province. For many years planning and dreaming for a strong church planting program has occurred. The momentum for such action is beginning to develop and it is anticipated that the next decades will be times of increased church growth for these churches.

Ontarianians are very generous people. Two significant ministries are the Crossroads Bible Camp where imaginative leadership and responsive churches have put together a strong, energetic camping program; and second, Eden Christian College, which at this point is being taken over by the Lincoln County school board. Besides this, they generously support other denominational projects.

Ontario is a huge province. From its Manitoba border on Highway 1 to the province of Quebec border on Highway 401 is as far as Winnipeg is from Vancouver. The conference is small; the distances between churches (and potential churches) is great. The challenge may well be greater than the distances, but hope and faith remain strong.

**1925 First Mennonite Brethren congregation at St. Jacobs (later Kitchener)**

|             |                      |
|-------------|----------------------|
| <b>1945</b> | <b>1,160 members</b> |
| <b>1967</b> | <b>2,525 members</b> |
| <b>1987</b> | <b>3,779 members</b> |

# Isaac Tiessen: the many facets of service

It's been quite a few years since Isaac Tiessen was in the midst of all the activity in the Ontario churches. In conversation with him, in the quiet tenor of retirement, his memory is thronged with experiences, ranging from complete terror to great blessings and joy.

He came from the small village of Krutojarovka in the Ukraine. There he experienced happy childhood years. Soon, however, these years were interrupted by the horrors of war, revolution and starvation. His family was particularly hard hit. His three brothers were brutally murdered. He recalls the incident: "I still remember how my father, through swollen lips due to a savage beating, told the murderers that he would pray for their salvation as long as he lived". The experience left an indelible impression on Tiessen and motivated him to a lifetime of dedicated service.

During the harsh post-war years great spiritual revivals came to the Ukraine. At one of these meetings, through the ministry of D.D. Duerksen, "great peace and joy" flooded Isaac's soul as he committed his life to Christ. He was baptized and after a series of events, during a period of denominational flux in Mennonite circles, emerged as an ordained minister in the MB church.

Tiessen immigrated to Canada in the late 1920s. He arrived in Leamington, Ontario and was received into the home of his uncle, Gerhard Tiessen. For 23 years Isaac worked in the Heinz Corporation food processing plant in Leamington, but his heart and every spare moment was dedicated to spiritual ministry. As early as 1925 he was recognized as one with spiritual gifts. He recalls becoming involved in preaching, song-leading, choir-conducting, youth leadership, Sunday school teaching and "just about everything one can do in church work".

In 1930 he married Anna Huebert and together they raised four children. Life became more busy as he took on the added responsibilities of fatherhood.

As an itinerant lay preacher in the difficult years of the depression, life was hard. Still he travelled the length and breadth of southwestern Ontario giving spiritual nourishment and leadership to the young churches of the region. He also led the Leamington church for over 20 years and succeeded H.H. Janzen as moderator of the Ontario conference from 1946 to 1954. At the North American conference level he served on the Board of Missions and Services and, on the Canadian level, the Board of Spiritual and Social Concerns.

With no formal training in theology and no post-secondary education, he compensated with home study, which included extensive and intensive reading of scripture, commentaries, relevant books and other literature.

"I could never have done anything like this without the encouragement and sacrifice of my life's partner, Anna," he stated. Often he would be gone for days and even weeks. The

family relied upon Anna's strong presence, in father's absence.

Fortunately, as time went by, conference and church support made full-time ministry somewhat easier. However, it was still not until 1958 that he became a fully supported pastor, in Chilliwack, British Columbia.

Returning to Ontario in 1963, he accepted a one-year interim pastorship in Kitchener MB Church. Then, in 1964, he and Anna accepted a call to the mission church in Toronto, where he served for six and a half years.

In 1971 he took on the chaplaincy of a nursing home in the London, Ontario area. He was in his late 60s but had no intention of retiring. His home church became the small congregation at Komoka, Ontario. Working along with church leadership, he shared some of the preaching duties, while still ministering as nursing home chaplain.

During this time he recognized the need for good music in nursing homes. Tiessen energetically pursued a "seniors hymn-book" project. This resulted in the distribution of over 25,000 hymnbooks to Ontario nursing homes.

In later years his familiarity with both English and German made him a welcome speaker at retreats, funerals and many other occasions where fluency in both languages was welcomed.

Everywhere he went, by plane, train or ship, he eagerly testified of his faith. In later years he also made tours to many parts of the world. Upon returning from a visit to Russia he gave 71 reports on his experience in the churches there.

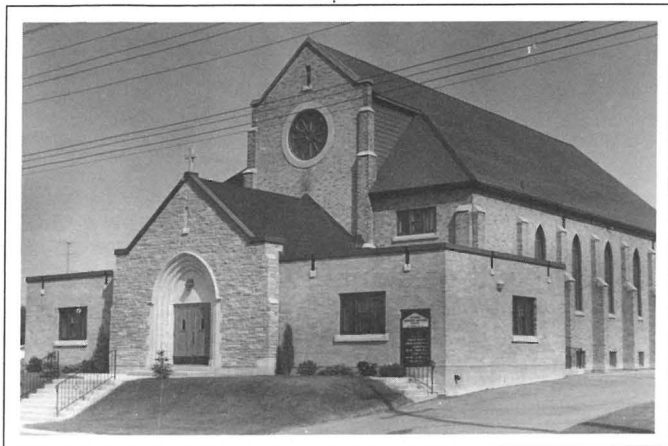
A full life! Isaac Tiessen reminisces, "I look back upon my life, that has been greatly blessed of the Lord, and although I have many times failed my Redeemer, he has never failed me!"



Isaac Tiessen, third from the left, is pictured together with John Froese, Henry Thielmann and Frank C. Peters outside the Kitchener church in 1979.

# ONTARIO

## The K-W region



**Kitchener Mennonite Brethren Church**  
19 Ottawa Street North  
Kitchener, Ontario  
N2H 3K2

The first group of Mennonite immigrants from southern Russia arrived in Waterloo, Ontario. On May 25, 1925 an organizational meeting took place and 18 of the people present agreed to organize a new church called the Molotschna MB Church of Kitchener. It changed to its present name in 1932.

Originally, services were held in St. Jacobs in 1925. Then a hall was rented and services were held in Kitchener. In 1952 the building, which had been purchased earlier, was sold and a new sanctuary at 19 Ottawa Street North was dedicated on January 18, 1953. In 1956 an education wing was added. These facilities were also used by the Ontario conference Bible school from 1955 to 1964.

In February, 1961 the congregation established the Zion MB Church. Also in 1961 a Sunday school outreach was begun in Waterloo. This outreach resulted in the formation of the Waterloo MB Church in 1967.

In 1986, in response to a perceived need, property in the Glencairn region of Kitchener was purchased and a new church was daughtered.

Present membership is 592.

Pastor(s): John Wall, Ron Toews



**Waterloo Mennonite Brethren Church**  
245 Lexington Road  
Waterloo, Ontario  
N2K 2B3

On November 13, 1960 the Kitchener MB Church began a mission Sunday school in Waterloo. By April, 1961 adult worship services were held. In January, 1967 the work was formally organized as the Waterloo MB Church. In June of that year the congregation was accepted into the Ontario conference.

In the beginning the congregation met in a public school for services. In the early 1970's a building project was begun and on May 23, 1973 a new church building was dedicated. During this past year, the congregation decided to begin an addition to the present facilities. Completion of this project, to house this growing congregation, is anticipated in 1989.

Present membership is 178.

Pastor(s): Chuck Buller, Randy Friesen

**Glencairn Mennonite Brethren Church**  
725 Erinbrook Drive  
Kitchener, Ontario  
N2E 2Y1

The Glencairn MB Church grew out of the Kitchener MB Church. A renewed vision within the Kitchener-Waterloo MB churches in 1982 provided the impetus for a new church planting venture. In 1984 the boards of the Kitchener-Waterloo churches met to discuss the feasibility of a new church in the area. The proposal received overwhelming support and a joint church planting committee was formed.

A suitable site was purchased and a fund raising drive was launched. Construction plans for a two-phase project were made. On April 5, 1987 a ground-breaking service was held.

Also, early in 1987, an invitation was extended to all those interested members of the Kitchener-Waterloo congregations who wished to join the new church venture. On January 3, 1988 the new congregation was chartered. And on February 14, they commissioned their first pastor couple.

Present membership is approximately 80.

Pastor: Paul Unger



# ONTARIO

## The Niagara Peninsula



**Scott Street Mennonite Brethren Church**  
339 Scott Street  
St. Catharines, Ontario  
L2N 1J7

On September 26, 1943 the first worship service of the MB Church of St. Catharines took place. And on October 17, 1943 the congregation officially joined the MB conference. The first services were held in two different rented buildings in the downtown area of St. Catharines.

In 1949 a building was erected on 54 Carlton Street. The church was then known as the St. Catharines MB Church. Five years later the building at Scott Street was constructed and the church became known by its present name.

This congregation has given rise to two other large congregations. In 1964 the Fairview MB Church was begun. And again in 1974, with membership overflowing, the Grantham MB Church was formed.

Present membership is 503.

Pastor(s): John Letkeman, Henry Penner



**Fairview Mennonite Brethren Church**  
455 Geneva Street  
St. Catharines, Ontario  
L2N 3V1

December, 1963 saw the formation of the Fairview MB Church. This church was planted through the efforts of the Scott Street MB Church, with 156 charter members. On February 16, 1964 the new church building was completed and the church was officially opened and dedicated to God.

The congregation has engaged in various outreach programs including open air drive-in services at a local shopping mall. The church has experienced consistent growth through its entire history.

In 1967 the congregation saw the need for an addition to the existing facilities. This addition, including a new gymnasium, was dedicated on December 1, 1968.

Present membership is 391.

Pastor(s): Paul Wartman, Peter Doerksen



**Grantham Mennonite Brethren Church**  
469 Grantham Avenue  
St. Catharines, Ontario  
L2M 6P5

In 1974, 10 years after the Scott Street congregation had given rise to the Fairview MB Church, it was again to the point where it needed to create a new MB church. The members of Scott Street responded to a call for donations of time and money, and a new church building was constructed for the new congregation.

On April 15, 1973 the Grantham MB church was dedicated. This new building was unusually shaped with the pews arranged in a semi-circle around the pulpit. The congregation began with 225 members.

The church grew steadily through transfer and evangelism. In 1980 members from the Grantham, Fairview, and Vineland churches organized the Fairview-Louth church.

Many members of this congregation have gone on to seminary studies and further ministry.

Present membership is 317.

Pastor(s): Don Enns, Thom Braun



**Niagara Christian Fellowship Chapel**  
**R.R. 3, Group 6**  
**Niagara-on-the-Lake, Ontario**  
**LOS 1J0**

This congregation began as a result of two mission Sunday schools. The first of these missions was, in 1951, under the direction of members of the Virgil MB Church. The second began in Queenston and soon was outgrowing the first. The two missions were united. The John Isaac family donated land and a church building was purchased for \$900. This structure was moved onto the land and on May 30, 1954 the building was dedicated.

As the fellowship continued it became more than simply a Sunday school, although this was still its primary focus. By 1957 there were 26 baptized believers. On October 16, 1957 the Virgil MB Church conducted an organizational meeting. By unanimous vote the group approved affiliation with the MB conference. The group came to be known as the Niagara Christian Fellowship Chapel.

In 1957 the basement of the facility was expanded and in 1965 an upper story was added to the expanded basement.

Present membership is 92.

Pastor: Gus Quadrius



**Niagara Falls Christian Fellowship**  
**6970 Mountain Road, R.R. 1**  
**Niagara Falls, Ontario**  
**L2E 6S4**

In the summer of 1974 a DVBS program was held in Niagara Falls school. That winter a youth club was held once a week in another school. On December 14, 1975 the first Sunday morning service was held in the Martha Cullimore school. In May, 1976 the congregation rented a vacant church on Fourth Ave. That summer (due to the illness of the pastor) the work was tabled. However, the Bible studies continued.

In the spring of 1978 the Ontario Home Missions Board called a pastoral couple to follow up the work. In September of that year a school was rented for Sunday morning services.

During the spring of 1979 land was purchased and a building program was begun in July. In September Sunday services were held in the new facilities and on October 28, 1979 the building was officially dedicated.

Present membership is 160.

Pastor: Henry H. Wiebe



**Orchard Park Bible Church**  
**R.R. 3, Hunter Road**  
**Niagara-on-the-Lake, Ontario**  
**LOS 1J0**

Having roots in the Virgil MB Church, the 99 charter members of the Orchard Park Bible Church launched out on January 1, 1971. The congregation grew steadily. Originally meeting for worship in Eden Christian College, the fellowship immediately began plans for construction of their own facility. August, 1973 saw the arrival of the congregation's first pastor couple.

In May, 1974 a sod-turning ceremony was held for the new sanctuary. One year later the dedication service was held.

As of the mid-1980's the church has considered expanding the facilities, as the congregation continues to grow.

Present membership is 204.

Pastor: Dewayn Isaac



**Virgil Mennonite Brethren Church**  
**Virgil, Ontario**  
**L0S 1T0**

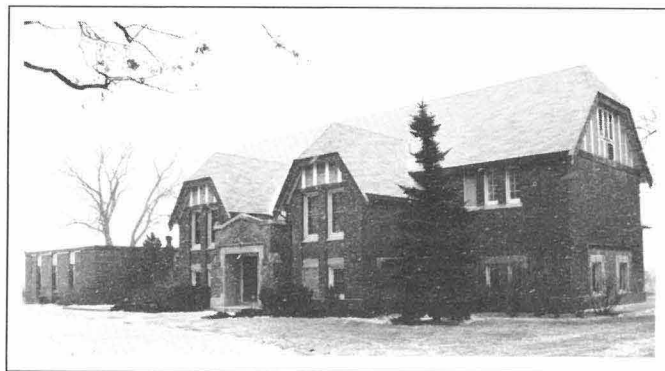
The Virgil MB Church was organized in the spring of 1937, with 26 members. Services were held in the town hall until late fall when the building burned down. The group then met in the local Baptist church. In October, 1940 property was purchased and a building program was begun.

By the early 1950's, the congregation had grown to over 400 members due to an influx of immigrants and people from western Canada. The building was enlarged in 1952. An education wing was added in 1961 and in 1972 an addition for office space, library, pastor's study and kitchen was built onto the rear of the church.

In the mid 1940's, mission Sunday schools were begun and they resulted in the establishing of the Niagara Christian Fellowship Chapel in June 1954. Another group, which became the Orchard Park Bible Church, was begun in 1971.

Present membership is 226.

Pastor: Leonard Reiss



**Fairview-Louth Mennonite Brethren Community Church**  
**R.R. 1, 9th Street Louth**  
**St. Catharines, Ontario**  
**L2R 6P7**

Fairview-Louth MB Community Church had its beginning in the fall of 1979. A group of people from the area churches purchased an old schoolhouse. Regular services began in February 1980. This was to allow the congregation time to renovate the facilities and for the group to get to know one another through Bible studies.

As the church grew it became apparent that more Sunday school class space was needed as well as a larger sanctuary. The group banded together to renovate the building to accommodate the needs. The church was officially opened on June 1, 1980. In February, 1981 further renovations were made adding a kitchen and library.

The congregation continued to expand and in the fall of 1982 the group planned a significant expansion program—building a new sanctuary onto the present structure. With the help of voluntary labour the project was completed on May 15, 1983. These new facilities continue to serve the growing church.

Present membership is 87.

Pastor: John Eckert



**Vineland Mennonite Brethren Church**  
**Glenview Road**  
**Vineland, Ontario**  
**L0R 1B0**

In 1932 the Vineland MB Church formed and in the same year it became a member of the MB conference of Ontario. Initially the congregation met together with the United Mennonite fellowship.

Beginning in 1934, the church began to meet on its own in Beamsville. In 1937 an old sawmill in Vineland was purchased and renovated. This was their meetingplace until 1959 when a new building was constructed on a new site in Vineland. In that same year an education wing was also added.

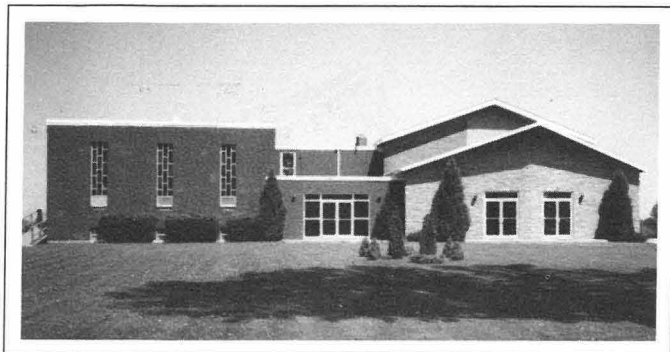
From this church came the founders of Bethesda Home. The congregation also initiated a Sunday school mission in East Hamilton which eventually became the Mountview MB Church. In 1968 the church also began the St. Ann's Community Church which continues to be a thriving church on the Niagara Peninsula.

Present membership is 276.

Pastor: Murray Unruh

# ONTARIO

## The southwest region



**Port Rowan Mennonite Brethren Church**  
R.R. 3  
Port Rowan, Ontario  
N0E 1M0

On October 25, 1927 five couples met in the Port Rowan area and organized the first MB Church in the community. The congregation was composed of Russian-Mennonite immigrant farmers. The young congregation met together with the United Mennonite Church in the Messiah Church building.

The congregation grew steadily even through the financially difficult years of the 1930's. In 1940 when the Messiah Church building went up for sale the congregation purchased it. They invited the United Mennonites to continue meeting with them but they decided to become a separate church.

As the church continued to grow, renovations were made to the building. The issue of language was prominent during the 1950's with the change to English taking place gradually. In 1958 the congregation constructed a new sanctuary. In 1969 an education wing was added to the sanctuary.

Present membership is 220.

Pastor(s): Cornelius Braun, Richard McCorkindale



**Leamington Mennonite Brethren Church**  
R.R. 3, Talbot Street East  
Leamington, Ontario  
N8H 3R4

The formation of the Leamington MB Church occurred through increased immigration into the Leamington area. Until the number of MBs was large enough to make a new congregation feasible, the MBs worshipped with the General Conference Mennonites.

On January 18, 1931 the first membership meeting was held. On August 28, 1932 the group decided to join the Ontario conference. Initially, the group met in Brown's Hotel, and later in Watson's store. In 1939 the Elliot Street building was erected. In 1964-65 another structure was constructed, at a new location. In 1979 a gymnasium and education wing were added to the building.

Present membership is 211.

Pastor: John Nikkel ,



**Komoka Community Church**  
Komoka, Ontario  
N0L 1R0

In the late 1960's several MB families moved to the Komoka area. In 1970 the Ontario MB Home Missions Board looked at the possibility of outreach in the area. By October, 1971 several families agreed to meet Sunday evenings. With 35 adults and children attending regularly a formal decision was made to begin Sunday services on November 21, 1971.

In the fall of 1972 a substantial group was meeting and they obtained official mission church status. The charter list consisted of 24 adults.

From 1975 to 1978 the congregation functioned as an independent, self-supporting church. Then, by request, it became a mission church again, supported by the Ontario conference. It became known as the Komoka Community Church.

The church had started a building fund. A generous anonymous donation allowed them to begin work on a building. The first service was held in the new facilities on November 23, 1980.

Present membership is 28.

Pastor: Gordon Russell



# ONTARIO

## North, west and east



**Evergreen Heights Christian Fellowship**  
Evergreen Hill Road  
Simcoe, Ontario  
N3Y 4T2

Several members of the Port Rowan MB Church who commuted from their homes in Simcoe, decided to begin a new church. On November 10, 1974 an information meeting was held and 12 families attended. This was enough to begin the new fellowship. The group decided to meet one Sunday evening per month and on May 4, 1975 the group met for its first Sunday morning service in a local public school.

On June 18, 1976, with 23 members, the congregation was officially accepted into the Ontario MB conference.

Initially, the church experienced some struggles. But by the early 1980's, 40 percent of the congregation were new believers. In 1982 the church expressed interest in purchasing property for a new building. On March 31, 1983 property was purchased and on March 10, 1985 the first service in the new facility was held. The building was dedicated on April 14, 1985.

Present membership is 71.

Pastor: pastoral vacancy



**Christian Fellowship Chapel**  
R.R. 4  
Orillia, Ontario  
L3V 6H4

The Christian Fellowship Chapel had its beginning in 1944 when a handful of believers began meeting in Hampshire, near Orillia, after having withdrawn from the United Church of Canada. The group met in homes for a number of years, largely using lay leadership. In the late 1940's the group came in contact with MBs through MB VBS workers.

In 1951 a first pastor couple was invited to assume pastoral responsibilities. In 1952 a small chapel was opened.

In 1961 the fellowship organized as a MB church. Steady growth in the following years increased the need for a larger facility. In 1972 a new church building was opened, the old building was used for Sunday school facilities. The congregation continues to grow and has become a member church of the Ontario conference (1976).

Present membership is 76.

Pastor: pastoral vacancy

**Christian Chinese Church**  
416 Midland Avenue  
Scarborough, Ontario  
M1N 4E5

The work in the Toronto Chinese community began in 1983. A reading room was opened in Chinatown. Meanwhile, the Ontario Board of Church Extension was looking for a suitable pastor. Enoch Chor was recommended to them. After being contacted, Chor took two years to make his affirmative decision.

Chor found that most Chinese did not like to read religious books so he closed the reading room. Rather, he began a Bible study in the office of a local computer business. In August, 1985 services began in a small chapel just off of Yonge Street.

Much of the work is door to door—hard work. The Chinese are reluctant to change religions. They feel that if they do they will betray their heritage. Just the same, once converted they are very dedicated believers.

Present membership is not available.

Pastor: Enoch Chor



**A baptismal group in the Kitchener MB Church, in the mid 1940's**

**Yorkdale Community Church**  
**272 Ranee Avenue**  
**Toronto, Ontario**  
**M6A 1N6**

The Yorkdale Community Church grew out of the Willowdale Christian Fellowship, which was begun in September 1957. On May 28, 1961 the group was officially organized as the Toronto MB Church with 16 charter members. Construction of church facilities began in the fall of 1962. The structure was dedicated on March 31, 1963.

In 1977 the Toronto MB Church explored the possibility of establishing additional MB churches in the area. From these initiatives came the Brampton Mennonite Church, organized on May 24, 1978. On May 28 of that year the Toronto church reorganized as the Yorkdale Community Church.

The church is situated in a difficult area of ministry. It has been decided recently to sell the church building. The congregation hopes to continue meeting in the building after its sale.

Present membership is 24.

Pastor: John Classey



**Mountview Mennonite Brethren Church**  
**380 Highway 8**  
**Stoney Creek, Ontario**  
**L8G 1E9**

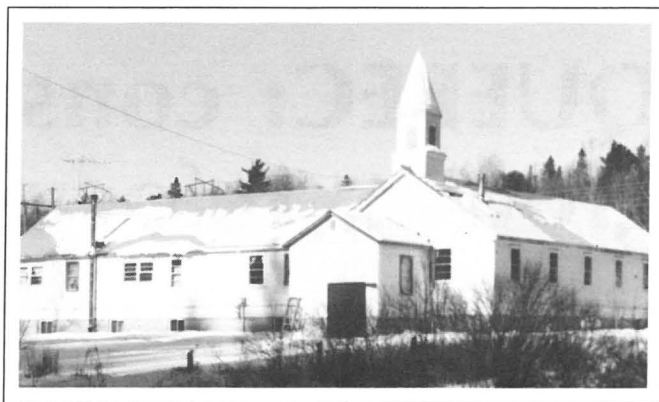
In 1957 the Ontario conference and Vineland MB Church sponsored a VBS summer program in Stoney Creek. When the summer VBS program was complete the Vineland church continued to serve the community with afternoon Sunday school. The Sunday school grew and the Vineland church continued to supply teachers and resource people.

The Board of Church Extension took up the vision and began plans to build a church in East Hamilton. It was the Hamilton MB Mission Church. This congregation remained active till 1966 when industrial expansion in the area forced the group to move its present location in Stoney Creek.

Therefore, the Mountview MB Church was born in 1966 in a very non-Mennonite environment. The congregation maintains a varied background.

Present membership is 48.

Pastor: Jake Bergen



**Bethesda Fellowship Church**  
**Spragge, Ontario**  
**P0R 1K0**

In 1959 a group of believers began meeting in a hall at Spragge, Ontario. At this time the group chose the name Bethesda Fellowship Church.

In 1967 the Ontario MB conference agreed to support the fellowship and supply leadership personnel. For a short time they tried to establish a fellowship in nearby Elliot Lake but this project was not successful. At this time buildings and property became available near Spragge. The fellowship officially set itself up in Spragge.

In 1973 the church began having formal membership and baptism. In 1978 the fellowship was accepted as a mission church of the Ontario MB conference.

Present membership is 23.

Pastor: pastoral vacancy

**National Capital Community Church**  
**Meeting at: Hunt Club Riverside Community Centre**  
**Ottawa, Ontario**

A small group of believers had been meeting in Ottawa for some time under the direction and encouragement of the Canadian Conference Board of Evangelism. In the summer of 1984 this group began a search for a pastor. In the fall of 1984 the call was answered. The MB church in Ottawa began and within a week the group decided to call themselves the National Capital Community Church. The congregation first met in a local school. In December, 1986 the group moved to a local community centre.

The church held its chartering service on November 18, 1984. The congregation's first baptism was held the day before its chartering service.

Present membership is 52.

Pastor(s): Hermann Plett, Arlen Bartsch

# QUEBEC: consolidating growth, refocussing the vision

There is something solid and energizing about the city of Montreal. Buildings, dating back to the 17th century, cathedrals and cobblestone streets, a modern subway system, Olympic park and the grand St. Lawrence River spanned by massive bridges, are images that impress western visitors.

But this isn't all—these sights and delights of Montreal are enhanced because of the many brothers and sisters who worship and witness in the suburbs of this great city.

In 1951, the more or less defunct Canada Inland Mission, an organization created at the Canadian conference level to minister to *besondere Völkgruppen* (special peoples), was instructed to turn attention to the province of Quebec.

In the early 1960s, Ernest and Lydia Dyck, a missionary couple recently returned from the Belgian Congo (now Zaire), were asked to launch a work in Quebec.

Coinciding with the Ernest Dyck appointment to Quebec was the refocussing of Quebec society and identity through the Quiet Revolution.

Dyck plunged into the work with vigour. Soon a group of believers was gathered and the St. Jerome congregation was accepted into the Canadian conference, in 1964. Of this group it was written: "Sixteen adults from three language groups joined hands and hearts to become members of the church." These consisted of English-speaking teachers, mostly from Vineland, and Martha Wall, who were struggling to learn the language; French-speaking Quebecois; and Portuguese-speaking pro-



At the July, 1984 convention in Abbotsford, B.C. the Quebec churches were formally accepted into the Canadian Conference of MB Churches as a full-fledged provincial participant.



Quebec Association church leaders, listening intently to proceedings at the 1984 Canadian convention

testants" (Penner, *No Longer At Arms Length*, p.106).

Momentum began to build. The Ste. Therese church, which subsequently planted the St. Laurent, St. Eustache and Ste. Rose congregations, became a reality and eventually the largest church in the Quebec conference. The Institut Biblique Laval, came into being in 1976. Henry Brucks, the executive secretary for the Board of Evangelism, was convinced that the fledgling church needed grounding in the scriptures. On very short notice, a United Church building, which was renamed the Ste. Rose church, came available for the sum of \$80,000.

At first most of the teaching personnel came from outside Quebec (Ben Klassen, Gerald Janzen, Herb Wiens and others) but in less than a decade, IBL has become staffed by competent, well-educated Quebec persons. IBL is affiliated with MBBC.

The future looks bright for this young church as the witness to Jesus Christ and his church continues to forge ahead in the province of Quebec.

|      |   |
|------|---|
| 1964 | First Mennonite Brethren congregation at St. Jerome |
| 1967 | not available                                       |
| 1987 | 716 members   |



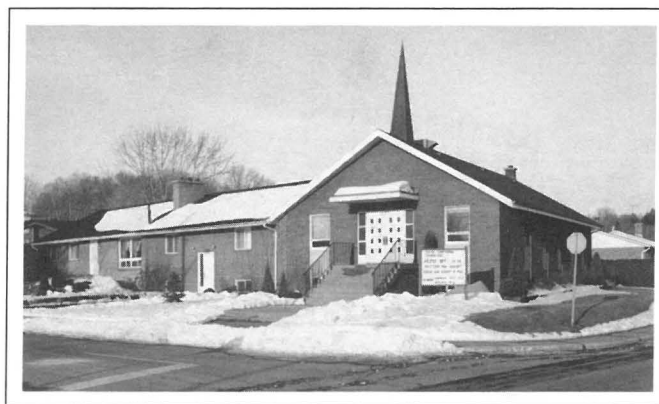
**Église Chrétienne Ste-Rose**  
85, Je me souviens  
Laval, Québec  
H7L 3L7

In the early 1970's a number of Quebec young people accepted the Lord in the Ste. Rose/Laval area, through the witness of the Ste. Therese MB Church. The beginning of the Ste. Rose church was bound up in the initiation of the Institut Biblique Laval. Henry Brucks, the executive secretary for the Board of Evangelism, saw the need to educate and train these eager young people. When a United Church facility in Ste. Rose/Laval became available, he advocated its purchase to the Canadian MB conference. This was where the new church congregation would meet.

In October, 1976 weekly Bible studies began. These studies grew in attendance and on December 10, 1977 the group, under the guidance of the Ste. Therese MB Church, met to plan and organize the Ste. Rose MB Church. In January, 1978 a regular church program was begun. Growth has continued.

Present membership is 77.

Pastor: Eric Wingender

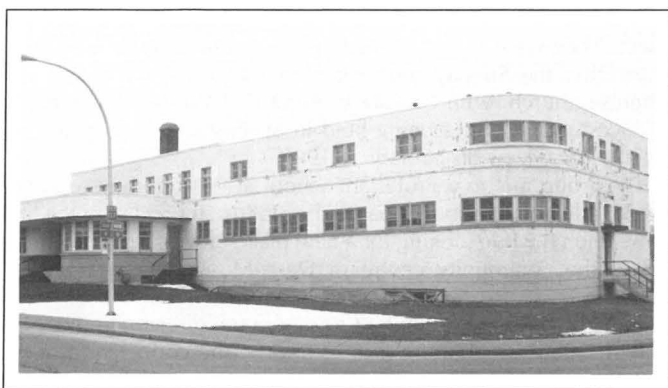


**Église des F.M. de Ste-Thérèse**  
2, chemin du Ravin  
Ste-Thérèse, Québec  
J7E 2T2

This congregation began in 1967 as an extension of the St. Jerome church. Under the direction of the Board of Evangelism, Ernest Dyck started the new church. Ste. Therese has the distinction of being the "mother" church of three other Quebec congregations, as well as holding much of the vision for the development of Institut Biblique Laval and Camp Peniel, the conference camp.

Present membership is 124.

Pastor: Pierre Wingender



**Église Chrétienne de St-Laurent**  
1775, boulevard Edouard-Laurin  
St-Laurent, Québec  
H4L 2B9

The first work in St. Laurent began in September, 1967. The Ernest Dycks began the work through the distribution of literature. By December, 1967 an office was rented and converted into a Bible centre where people met for Bible study. The work grew and by June, 1968 Sunday services were begun. On December 30, 1969 the group was accepted into the Canadian conference.

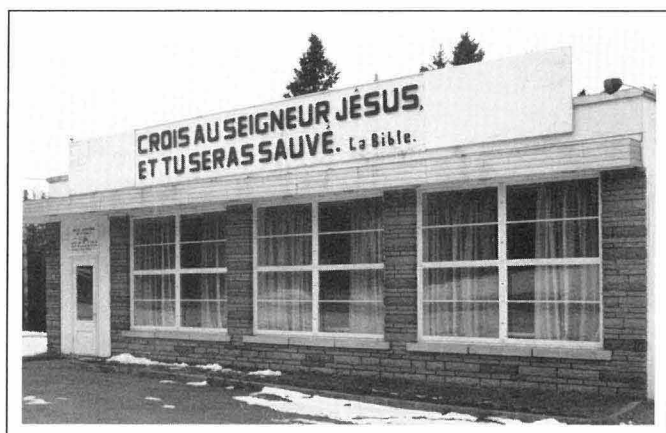
During the early years the church met in rented facilities. For various reasons they had to move five times in six years. Finally, on May 1, 1974 the group was able to purchase its own facility. They purchased a duplex. They met on the main floor and the two upstairs apartments were rented out for income. In May, 1980 this building was sold because the church had outgrown it. In 1985 the St. Laurent church purchased a large building which it shares with the Institut Biblique Laval.

During its early years the church experienced slow growth and some difficult times. However, it is now a thriving, healthy congregation.

Present membership is 134.

Pastor(s): Gerald Kraemer, Guy Demers





**Église Chrétienne Évangélique**  
1205, Principale  
St-Donat, Québec  
J0T 2C0

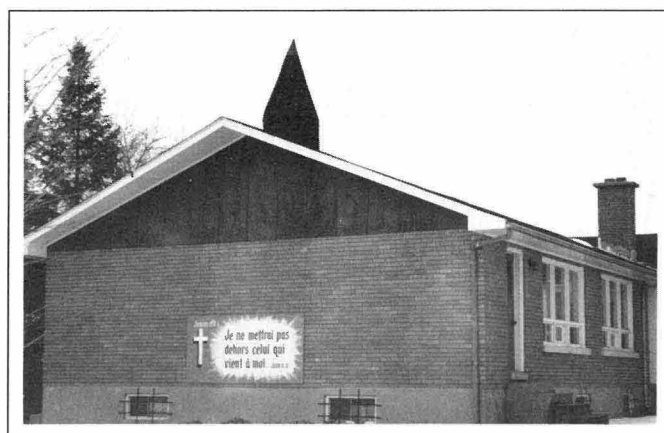
In the mid 1970's the gospel came to St. Donat and several young people came to know Christ. In April, 1978 a student from Institut Biblique Laval began a work in St. Donat. With hard work, a dozen people began to meet regularly.

They began with door-to-door evangelism. The local parish priest sent letters to his parishioners warning them of the evils of the Mennonite cult. Hostility grew to the extent that at one time rocks were thrown at the small congregation's place of worship. After a friendly visit with the parish priest the trouble stopped.

Later, the congregation discovered that the building it was meeting in was to be sold and they would not be able to renew their lease. But the Lord provided with an ideal building ideally situated, which the group purchased.

Present membership is 22.

Pastor: Ben H. Klassen



**Église Chrétienne de St-Jérôme**  
7, rue Morand  
St-Jérôme, Québec  
J7Y 2A3

In the early 1960's Ernest and Lydia Dyck arrived in Quebec "on loan" from their mission efforts in the Belgian Congo (Zaire). They came to St. Jerome, a thriving centre with a population of 30,000. The Dycks canvassed the town and within eight weeks of their arrival were ready to begin with Sunday services. Three years later, in 1964, the St. Jerome church was accepted into the Canadian MB conference as the first church from Quebec.

Initially, this group was a collage of three language groups, French, English and Portuguese. This group continued to grow, and was the standard-bearer for the church in Quebec for nearly a decade.

Present membership is 81.

Pastor: Andre Bourque



**Église Chrétienne Évangélique de St-Eustache**  
69, rue St-Laurent  
St-Eustache, Québec  
J7P 3X6

The St. Eustache church grew out of the work of the Ste. Therese church. In the early 1970's a group of young believers began to meet. They were taught every Monday evening by Ernest Dyck.

Initially, the Sunday morning services were held in the Ste. Therese church, with Sunday evening and Wednesday evening services and activities being held in St. Eustache. The group officially organized on January 1, 1977.

The group met in a Protestant school at first but they soon felt the hostility of the school board. They fellowshiped with the Ste. Rose church while looking for a new place of worship. They moved to the community centre of Deux-Montagnes in February, 1979.

In early 1978 the group had formed a building committee. On July 4, 1980 the building project began. The cooperation of the congregation and the various churches in this project was a great witness to the community.

Present membership is 149.

Pastor: Francois Vermette

**Victory Fellowship Mennonite Brethren Church**  
**Waterloo, Quebec**  
**J0E 2N0**

This church began as a Sunday school project sponsored by the Canadian Sunday School Mission in 1972. During the summer of 1974, a student group from Columbia Bible Institute, B.C., conducted a DVBS program. At that time the CSSM gave the work over to the MB conference. On June 15, 1975 the group, calling itself the Victory Fellowship, had indicated their interest in forming an MB church. Victory Fellowship became a member of the MB conference in the fall of 1975.

One of the ongoing problems of the congregation has been to find a suitable place to meet. In 1977 the group was asked to leave the elementary school, who wished not to rent the facility to religious groups any longer. Eventually, in 1981, the congregation decided to meet in two places—the motivating factor being the desire to form two congregations, one in Cowansville and one in Waterloo. However, in the interim some of the Anglophone members have left the group. Presently the group meets as one group, in Waterloo.

Present membership is 17.

Pastor: Fred Sommerville

**Église Chrétienne Évangélique**  
**111, 5e rue**  
**New Richmond, Québec**  
**G0C 2B0**

In the Gaspé region of Quebec small villages are scattered along the coast. In Grande-Rivière, in 1974, a small group of believers developed. They commuted to attend church in Paspebiac 75 kilometers away.

Meanwhile in New Richmond, 75 kilometers on the other side of Paspebiac, another group of Christians was growing and commuting to the Paspebiac church. This congregation formed as an Evangelical Baptist church with about 20 members.

The group in Grande-Rivière asked the MBs for help. The conference sent Denis and Lyne Tremblay in September, 1981 who worked aggressively in evangelism.

The Baptist church in New Richmond split in September, 1982 and one group began to attend the congregation in Grand-Rivière. For several months in 1983, the Tremblays worked half-time in both congregations. The New Richmond group grew more quickly than the Grande-Rivière group. The Tremblays decided to move to New Richmond.

In April, 1984 the Evangelical Church of New Richmond was chartered with the MB conference.

Present membership is 26.

Pastor: Denis Tremblay

**Église Évangélique F.M. de Charlesbourg**  
**9040, place Lavallière**  
**Charlesbourg, Québec**  
**G1G 5G5**

This church-planting project was begun in 1982. It was one of the first official outreach efforts of the newly-formed Quebec Association of MB churches. David and Liette Franco, after many years of pastoring at St. Jerome, took on the new work.

Through various modes of evangelism and Bible studies, the work began. The core group had a strong beginning, with some attenders coming from a small Baptist church which had disbanded. Presently the congregation meets in rented facilities.

Present membership is 25.

Pastor: David Franco

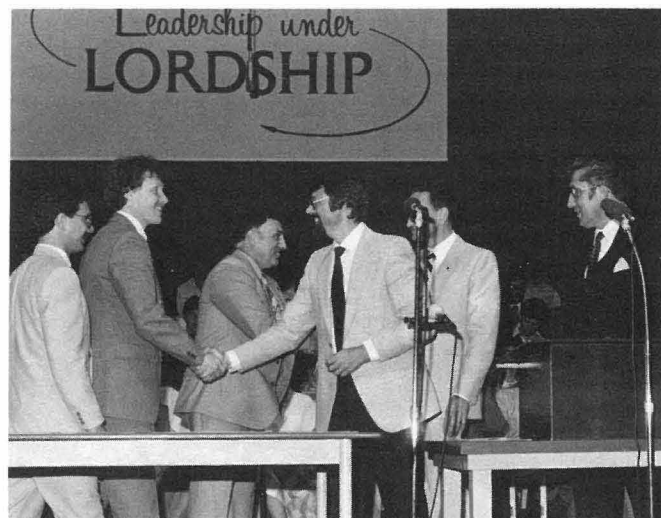
**Église Évangélique**  
**189, rang Lepage**  
**Ste-Anne-des-Plaines, Québec**  
**J0N 1H0**

The work in Ste. Anne-des-Plaines had its beginning in 1983, through the efforts of a group from the Ste. Therese church. The group began a home Bible study and under the leadership of schoolteacher Pierre Roberge, who later became part-time pastor of the congregation, began formal worship services.

The fellowship is presently meeting in rented facilities.

Present membership is 25.

Pastor: Robert Dagenais



**Congratulations, together with prayers of good wishes, are offered to the Quebec Association leaders at the 1984 convention.**

# SASKATCHEWAN: stability in the midst of change

At a recent provincial convention, the churches affirmed the desire to double in membership by the end of the century—the year 2000. The remarkable fact about the Saskatchewan provincial conference is, however, how stable the church has been over the nearly 90 years of its life.

The first Mennonite Brethren church was organized in 1898 in Laird, northern Saskatchewan. It was a very primitive and difficult life for the early settlers. Periodic droughts, short summers and bitterly-cold, long winters took a terrible toll on the settlers who were spread over great distances. One pioneer wrote “that they only go the nineteen miles to church every other Sunday as the horses were so thin and poor” (p.158; J.A. Toews).

During the first two decades of the twentieth century a wave of immigration from the U.S. led to the rapid expansion of MB centres and church life. These settlers from Minnesota, Nebraska (particularly to northern Saskatchewan), South Dakota and Kansas (more particularly to the south) formed the Brotherfield, Dalmeny, Borden, Hepburn and Waldheim congregations.

The northern *Kreis* (conference) flourished and was characterized by growth, district conference and *Saengerfests*. These celebrations brought unity and joy to the churches.

Meanwhile, in the southern *Kreis* Mennonite Brethren settlements were established along the CPR line. Many immigrants from the U.S.A. particularly from North Dakota, and also families from Manitoba, helped give stability to many congregations.

In the period from 1898, when the first church was organized at Laird, to 1914, eight churches were formed in the south. Of these eight—Main Centre, Herbert, Flowing Well, Kelstern, Woodrow, Greenfarm, Bethania and Fox Valley—four remain active today.

A Bible school was formed in Herbert

in 1913 and continued on until 1958. It was then merged with Bethany Bible Institute which was founded in Hepburn in 1927.

The arrival of the great wave of Russian Mennonites probably created more tension in Saskatchewan than anywhere else. “The two Mennonite groups were divided by cultural and class differences,” writes E.K. Francis. “In the eyes of the native Mennonites the newcomers appeared worldly, overbearing and unwilling to do manual labour. The *Russlaender* people, on the other hand, found their benefactors, on whose goodwill they were dependent . . . backward and uneducated” (J.A. Toews, p.164).

Besides new churches being organized in Glenbush, Millinger, Watrous and Central (in Saskatoon), the dialogue between these two groups soon brought them together in a spirit of unity.

By 1945 the membership of the two Saskatchewan conferences was 2,350. Stability is a key word in understanding the Saskatchewan conference. Even

through the loss of many families to other parts of Canada the membership, between 1945 and 1967, remained basically the same.

There is a remarkable resilience and energy in Saskatchewan. All six major Saskatchewan cities have a Mennonite Brethren witness. Saskatoon has three churches; Regina has one, as has Swift Current, Moose Jaw, Yorkton and Lloydminster.

To double the membership of the Saskatchewan conference is a large order, and may be hard to reach. But this conference is accustomed to thinking as broadly as the sky under which they live, and with the toughness that the long winters are bound to create. With a forward-looking faith they will continue to grow and flourish.

## 1899 First Mennonite Brethren congregation at Laird

|      |               |
|------|---------------|
| 1945 | 2,347 members |
| 1967 | 2,317 members |
| 1987 | 3,260 members |



A conference gathering (1963) in the Herbert, Saskatchewan auditorium.

# Katherine (Schroeder) Willems: the many facets of service

Katherine (Schroeder) Willems, also known as Aunt Tina to her nieces and nephews, and others who know her well, was born August 26, 1899 in Russia to John K. and Katherine Schroeder. In 1903, when she was four years old, the family immigrated to Canada. They settled on a farm in southern Saskatchewan, near Main Centre. The family attended the MB Church.

On October 23, 1923 she married Jacob F. Willems of the Waldheim/Brotherfield community. Her recollection of the wedding ceremony gives us a contrast between then and now:

"At our wedding . . . two ministers preached their sermons. We didn't just stand up for a short ceremony. It always paid to sit down on chairs in those days. The way it is now, it hardly pays to dress up for such a little while. There were no attendants and the father did not take in the bride. The bridal couple came in together and went out together.

"Our wedding was an afternoon service with two ministers. The choir sang for us. This was followed by a lunch, which we had prepared at home and brought to church. After the ceremony and lunch we returned to the sanctuary for a lengthy program of singing and recitations . . ."

The newly married young couple purchased a farm in the Waldheim area and moved onto it. Mrs. Willems reminisces: "The farm houses in those days were not built so warm, so it was very cold in winter. Many times there was ice in the water pail in the morning. So I had to get up early, at 4:30 am to heat the house, then go to help chore, get breakfast ready, pack school lunches and see that the children were ready for school."

Mrs. Willems was a mother of 12 children. The children witnessed her work from early till late. She had a cheerful disposition and was not daunted by difficult circumstances. Most work situations were met confidently and methodically,

forging ahead until the task was completed. She was frequently heard singing while she worked.

The Willems' were quite involved in the Brotherfield MB Church. In winter they would often be the first ones to arrive at the very cold church building. Mrs. Willems remembers winter Sunday mornings: "Heating the church when it was 30°F below zero was difficult. The church had been cold for most of the week so Sunday morning the fires had to be lit very early. All the wood and coal had to be carried from the woodshed. Everybody came to church in winter. Brotherfield never closed because of stormy weather."

Mrs. Willems fondly remembers winter *Bibelstunde*, which took place during the day and lasted usually for four or five days. She relates that there was discussion for an hour or so before lunch, and then a study session in the afternoon. The attenders would go back to their homes for supper and later return to church for an evening service. These were precious times in the small church.



Conference time was also a special occasion for Mrs. Willems. Especially the time that the Canadian convention was held in Brotherfield. She recalls:

"When the conference was in Brotherfield we set up more cookstoves. We had a few in our church summer kitchen. We'd cook *borscht*, chicken noodle soup and *pluma moos*. Long tables were set up inside the church and in the tent 'lean-to' which was attached to the church. We'd bake our own pies and buns. We would bring milk and butter. Sometimes we brought cheese, sausage, coffee and sugar cubes. We served our guests breakfast at home. We all had lunch and dinner at church."

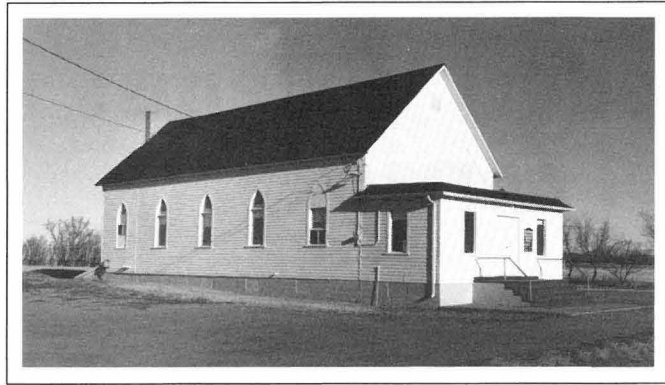
There were many people to be housed at such an event. Mrs. Willems remembers: "All our strawtacks were filled and covered with sheets and blankets. All households, in those days, had lots of pillows and homemade woollen blankets. Some people had 14 or 15 overnight guests. Seven guests in a home was common."

Another highlight for Mrs. Willems was the *Diugenten Kurses*. These "music courses" were held during mid or late July, for one week. Many choirs came together for singing and conducting instruction. Most choir members learned to conduct basic patterns. For the final night a mass choir would perform for a large audience. Some of these courses were held in conjunction with a *Saengerfest*.

In 1976 her husband Jacob died. Mrs. Willems left the farm and moved into a suite in the Waldheim retirement home. Here she keeps house and pursues a busy schedule with family, friends and community affairs. She has been and continues to be a pillar in the Brotherfield church. She is a living example of the loving work and care that has gone into the foundation of the Mennonite Brethren church in Brotherfield, in Saskatchewan and in Canada.



## The south



**Main Centre Mennonite Brethren Church**  
Main Centre, Saskatchewan  
S0H 2V0

In early May, 1904, settlers from Manitoba began a settlement north of Herbert, Saskatchewan. This group established themselves as the Bethel MB Church on June 18, 1904 with a charter membership of 15. The congregation grew and in 1907 a church building was built. In 1921 the building was enlarged and is still in use today.

After World War I, the congregation helped provide relief for immigrants to Canada. In 1926-27, 32 of these immigrants moved to Beechy, Saskatchewan to start a church.

During the hard times of the 1930's many farmers moved to B.C. The membership of the church, however, stayed strong with 209 members reported in the 1944 yearbook. Over the years the congregation has been involved in foreign missions sending out many missionaries both with faith missions as well as with the MB Board of Missions.

Present membership is 84.

Pastor: Reg Toews



**Parliament Community Church**  
4011 Pasqua Street  
Regina, Saskatchewan  
S4S 6C8

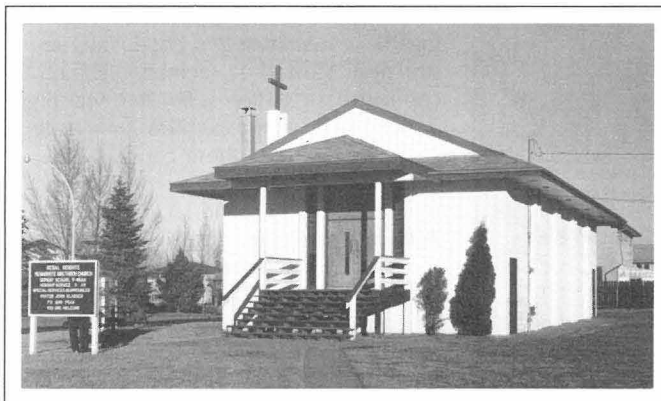
In December of 1941, approximately eight MB families, who had immigrated from Russia, formed the first church in Regina. They met in homes and worshipped in German. A year later they purchased a small lot and built a church. In 1943 they were joined by a few General Conference families.

In the 1950's the General Conference members began their own church and the remaining MBs began worshipping in the English language. The congregation recognized its need to build larger facilities and did so in 1960, at a new location.

The congregation continued to grow and by 1969 was looking to build again. The plans were not finalized until a few years later and in 1974 the new structure, on new property, was completed. At this time the congregation became known as the Parliament Community Church, Mennonite Brethren.

Present membership is 174.

Pastor: Allan Camponi



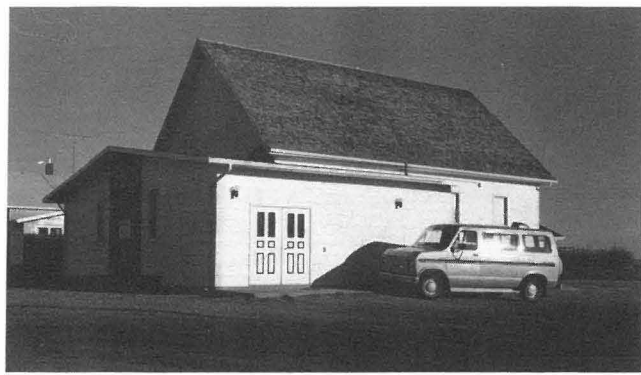
**Regal Heights Mennonite Brethren Church**  
1291 Gordon Road  
Moose Jaw, Saskatchewan  
S6H 3E3

The Regal Heights MB Church had its beginning as a home Bible study group in 1964. It was led under the auspices of the Saskatchewan MB Missions committee. The church was begun as a mission to the community, comprised of a few MB families.

On June 4, 1967, the group formally organized as an MB church with a charter membership of 14 members. At first the group met in homes. Later they moved to a local recreation centre and then to a centre for the handicapped. Eventually they were able to build a new building into which they moved in 1970 and in which they worship to this day.

Present membership is 58.

Pastor: John Klassen



**Elim Mennonite Brethren Church of Kelstern**  
R.R. 1  
Hodgeville, Saskatchewan  
S0H 2B0

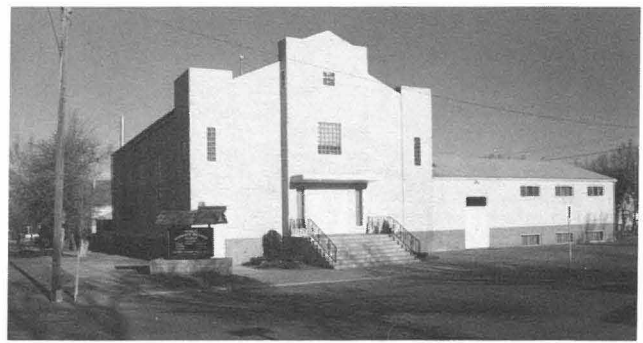
In 1908 Mennonites began meeting together in homes for worship services in the Hodgeville-Kelstern area. The group split into two groups—the Gnadenau group to the north and the Elim congregation to the south. During the year 1910, the group at Elim became a member of the MB conference.

For the first years services were held in homes until 1912 when they met in the Queen Centre School. In 1918 the first church was constructed, three miles west of Kelstern. In 1954 the building was moved into the town of Kelstern.

A momentous occasion took place in 1968 when the Gnadenau and Elim congregations joined together once again. From a low membership of 37 members, the church has grown to a present 54 members. In 1985 the church gathered to celebrate its 75th anniversary.

Present membership is 54.

Pastor: Bill McGladdery



**Herbert Mennonite Brethren Church**  
Herbert, Saskatchewan  
S0H 2A0

The first settlers to this community met for worship in their homes. Later, when a schoolhouse was built it was used on an alternating basis with the General Conference church as a place of worship. In 1905 the MBs formally organized as a congregation. Until 1944 the pastors served without remuneration but in that year the congregation undertook to hire a full-time pastor.

The church was also instrumental in the formation of the Herbert Bible School. The school was founded in 1913 and made a significant contribution for many years. It merged with Bethany Bible Institute in 1958.

Present membership is 224.

Pastor: pastoral vacancy



**Hillside Christian Fellowship Church**  
Beechy, Saskatchewan  
S0L 0C0

The Mennonites settling in the Beechy area came from 13 different Russian colonies and from Germany. Many first lived in the Main Centre area until land became scarce, and then moved to the Beechy area.

The congregation was officially organized on July 19, 1925. It retained its affiliation with the Main Centre church. By October 1, 1927 the congregation felt strong enough to become independent. They called themselves the Friedensheim MB Church. Without an adequate place of worship they met together only once a month.

In 1928 it was decided to build a place of worship. However, the depression interfered with plans and the group continued to meet in vacant farm homes.

In 1942 a new church building was begun and completed in 1944. In 1953 the building was moved into the village of Beechy. In the early 1980's six lots were purchased in the north part of the town and in 1982 a fine new facility was dedicated to God.

Present membership is 45.

Pastor: Mike Housek



**Elbow Christian Fellowship**  
**Eyebrow, Saskatchewan**  
**S0H 1L0**

During the early 1930's, 10-12 families of Mennonite background began meeting in homes on Sunday mornings. They were of various denominational backgrounds. The group continued to meet in this way until the 1940's when they decided to buy a vacated schoolhouse as a meetingplace.

Crops were poor and many members moved away. During these hard times pastors from the surrounding area came to minister to the group which was still inter-denominational.

In the early 1960's the MBs from the group sought help from the Saskatchewan MB Conference for further community outreach. It was decided to build a church building. This project was completed in 1962.

Since that time the congregation has remained small but continues to seek to serve its community and to be a witness.

Present membership is 26.

Pastor: John J. Heinrichs



**Lucky Lake Christian Fellowship Church**  
**Lucky Lake, Saskatchewan**  
**S0L 1Z0**

In the early 1920's the MB conference sent ministers into this area to conduct services in various homes. This work became more aggressive in the 1940's and by April 15, 1945 the first Sunday services were held.

In 1947 the congregation bought a vacated school building which was moved to a new location. On September 25, 1949 the congregation was able to dedicate the structure.

During the late 1950's the church changed its name to the MB Mission Church. In 1965 the congregation became independent and became known as the MB Church of Lucky Lake.

In 1969, with tight economic times, the Beechy MB and Lucky Lake MB churches pooled their resources and called one minister to serve both congregations.

In March, 1985 the congregation began construction of a new facility which was dedicated in July, 1986. The congregation changed its name to the Lucky Lake Christian Fellowship Church.

Present membership is 15.

Pastor: John Siemens



**Bridgeway Community Church**  
**510-13th Avenue North East**  
**Swift Current, Saskatchewan**  
**S9H 4K1**

The Swift Current branch of the MB church was formed in 1934 with approximately 25 members. For the first six years, the group met in homes until sufficient financial resources could be mustered to build. In 1940 the first sanctuary was erected. This small structure was outgrown by the congregation in 1959. A milestone was reached previous when the church was able to call a full-time, salaried minister.

In 1959 a new building was erected. The congregation continued to grow and in 1976-77 engaged in another building program. This new facility was dedicated on May 29, 1977.

Present membership is 341.

Pastor(s): Peter J. Klassen, Clarence Peters

# SASKATCHEWAN

## The central region



**Woodrow Gospel Chapel**  
Woodrow, Saskatchewan  
S0H 4M0

In the spring of 1910 Mennonites from North Dakota immigrated to the Woodrow area. Initially, the group met in homes but, in 1912, the school district constructed a school building and the congregation began to meet there. In June of 1912 the congregation held its first baptism, following a revival meeting.

In 1916 the congregation was denied permission to meet in the school. This crisis prompted the need to construct a church building. On December 31, 1916 a new building was dedicated.

During the 1930's many changes took place. The use of the German language was gradually reduced and by the end of that decade it was no longer used in Sunday school.

By the 1950's the group talked of building a new church. In 1957 construction of a new building was begun in the town. On November 23, 1958 this building was dedicated.

In 1968 the congregation changed its name to the present title. Present membership is 77.

Pastor: Doug McRae



**The Brotherfield congregation, formed in 1901, has had a continued vital ministry in northern Saskatchewan.**



**Forest Grove Community Church**  
502 Webster Street  
Saskatoon, Saskatchewan  
S7N 2L3

In April, 1961 the Central MB Church of Saskatoon began exploring the possibilities of building a new church in the Nutana area of Saskatoon. On January 12, 1964, with 99 charter members, the Nutana MB Church was born and dedicated.

This new, enthusiastic congregation grew quickly. As early as 1966 the possibility of building a new church was discussed. However, it was not until November 28, 1981 that the congregation bought a parcel of land in the Forest Grove area. The building project was divided into two phases, with the first phase including the gymnasium, offices and classroom areas. On December 16, 1984 the congregation dedicated the entire facility. The church was known, as of 1983, as the Forest Grove Community Church. The congregation continues to grow.

Present membership is 406.

Pastor(s): Robert W. Radtke, Harry Strauss, Merv Boschman



**Central Mennonite Brethren Church**  
809-32nd Street West  
Saskatoon, Saskatchewan  
S7L 3R6

(no history submitted)





**Arelee Mennonite Brethren Church**  
Arelee, Saskatchewan  
S0K 0H0

As early as 1897 the first settlers came to the Eagle Creek District. In 1903 the first worship services were held and as more immigrants came it was decided that a church building was needed. Since transportation by oxen was slow and inconvenient, two buildings were built at strategic locations.

As attendance continued to increase, it was agreed that the two groups amalgamate. On October 31, 1908 the congregation decided to call themselves the Russian MB Church of Eagle Creek.

The first church building was built and the congregation increased rapidly. Consequently additions had to be built on twice. In 1917 the building was deemed too small. An entirely new church was built in the village of Arelee, where the church meets to this day.

Present membership is 49.

Pastor: John Willems



**Parkland Community Church**  
78 Front Street  
Yorkton, Saskatchewan  
S3N 3L2

In the early 1980's the Saskatchewan MB Board of Church Extension began to plan a church for Yorkton. Of eight communities surveyed, the board decided on Yorkton, following the request of the group already gathering there.

On September 18, 1983 the group held their first Sunday service. They met in a local high school for the first two years and following that purchased a large facility. Portions of this building were leased out for income.

The congregation is young. It has a special ministry to people under the age of 45. The informal atmosphere helps to meet the needs of the congregation.

Present membership is 33.

Pastor: John H. Wiens



**West Portal Mennonite Brethren Church**  
3134-33rd Street West  
Saskatoon, Saskatchewan  
S7L 6V5

In 1950, under the Northern District MB conference, a work was begun in the Mayfair area of Saskatoon. That summer the MB Missions Board also began DVBS, Bible clubs and Sunday school. Some of this work extended to the west side of the city.

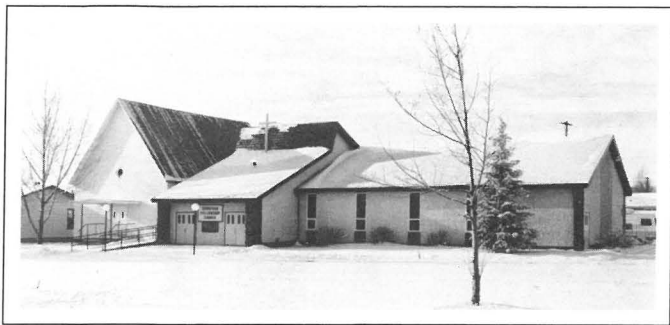
In 1953, a small core of workers taught Sunday school in the area and by Christmas of 1953 an adult Sunday school was added. Soon a Sunday morning worship service followed.

In December, 1954 the services were moved to the basement of a new building until the upper sanctuary could be completed. On December 14, 1956 the group became a formally organized church.

In 1962, the congregation became known as the West Portal MB Church. In the early 1980's the congregation embarked on a building project on 33rd Street. Strong, even growth characterizes this congregation.

Present membership is 200.

Pastor(s): Abe C. Klassen, Ralph Gliege



**Christian Fellowship Church**  
Lanigan, Saskatchewan  
S0K 2M0

The town of Lanigan began when a large potash field was discovered in the region. Between 1964 and 1969 the town grew from 500 to 1700. The Christian and Missionary Alliance had begun a ministry, but it was struggling. They approached the MB Mission board of Saskatchewan to take on the mission.

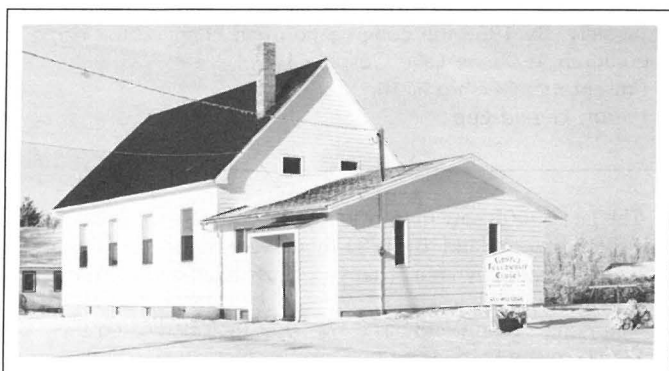
In October, 1972 the mission board called a meeting of the group in Lanigan and the first service was on November 5, 1972.

In the summer of 1974 the community experienced another large influx of people and the congregation almost doubled in size.

In 1976 the congregation became self-supporting. By 1981 the church building was becoming crowded so it was decided to construct a new building. On September 19, 1982 the construction was complete. On November 7 the building was dedicated.

Present membership is 58.

Pastor: Mel Konkel



**Gospel Fellowship Church**  
Foam Lake, Saskatchewan  
S0A 1A0

The MB Church of Foam Lake was officially established on November 16, 1938. In 1939 the fellowship was accepted into the Canadian conference. Services were first held in the Bertdale Hall northwest of the town. In 1939 the congregation began a building fund. In 1940 the small congregation baptized 22 new members.

In 1945 the building project began and on October 14 dedication services were held for the new building. The congregation

was subsidized by the Saskatchewan conference until 1979. In June of that year, the group became self-supporting. Also at this time the fellowship became known as the Gospel Fellowship Church.

Present membership is 37.

Pastor: Art Isaac

**Gateway Community Church**  
Meeting at: The Seventh Day Adventist Church  
Dalton and 3rd Avenue  
Canora, Saskatchewan  
S0A 0L0

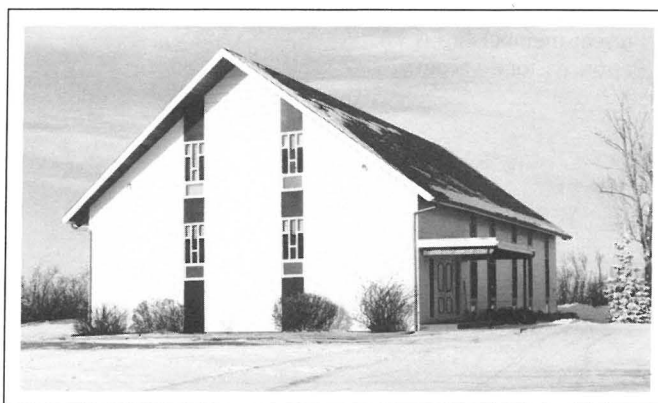
During the summer of 1985 the Saskatchewan MB Home Missions board called the Wes Reimer family to begin a work in Canora. In October of that year services began in a home.

On November 3, 1985 the group moved to the Seventh Day Adventist Church in the town. At this time the local Baptist congregation ceased meeting and several of its members decided to attend the new congregation.

On September 17, 1986 the group agreed to officially charter as an MB church. Upon its chartering the group moved its office to a downtown location to better serve the community.

Present membership is 21.

Pastor: Wes Reimer



**Philadelphia Mennonite Brethren Church**  
Watrous, Saskatchewan  
S0K 4T0

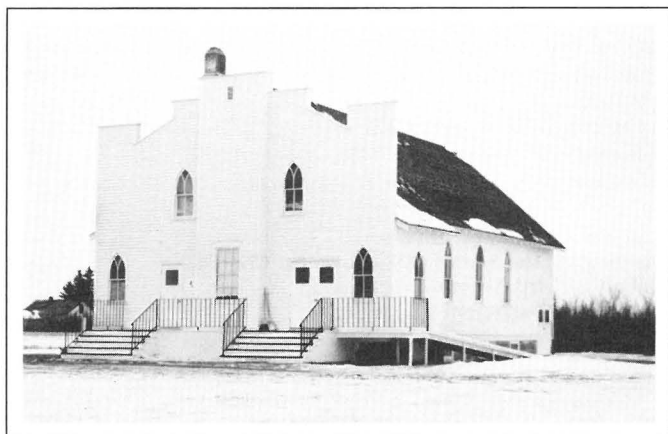
This congregation near Watrous was established by immigrants from Russia. It was organized in 1927 as an Evangelical Mennonite Church congregation. In 1932 it joined the MB conference.

During the early years the group met in an old school building. In 1948 a new building was erected. Finally in 1975 the present facility was constructed. This building was constructed some 15-20 kilometers out of the town of Watrous to accommodate the wide region from which the membership travels. A very successful church clubs program has been introduced in the town of Watrous, giving this congregation a vital witness in its community.

Present membership is 115.

Pastor: Henry Warkentin

## The north



**Borden Mennonite Brethren Church**  
Borden, Saskatchewan  
S0K 0N0

The Borden congregation began in 1903 when the first settlers arrived in the area. Services were held in homes for the first three years. When the community built a school, the congregation met in it until able to build a church.

In 1907 the first building was completed and served the congregation for approximately 45 years. Some additions were built on as the years went by.

In 1952 a new church was built on the same location and is still used today.

Present membership is 78.

Pastor: pastoral vacancy



**Blaine Lake Gospel Chapel**  
109 Railway Avenue West  
Blaine Lake, Saskatchewan  
S0J 0J0

In 1906 Herman Fast, who taught Russian in school, held services in homes and in the Petrofka school. The people who had attended these services decided to build a church in the country. Although financial difficulties impeded the progress of the builders, the church was completed around 1912-13.

It was not until the 1940's that an MB church was established in the Blaine Lake area. The building was moved to Blaine Lake from the Harmonia district. The congregation grew and soon the building was too small. MB missions was petitioned for funds to enlarge the church. With some volunteer help from neighbouring churches, the building was enlarged in the 1950's.

Services, until the late 1950's, were in the Russian and English languages. In 1959 the Russian-speaking people began meeting separately. By 1967 the congregation had changed the name of the church to Blaine Lake Gospel Chapel.

Present membership is 10.

Pastor: Gerald Epp



**Dalmeny Community Church**  
Dalmeny, Saskatchewan  
S0K 1E0

The late 1800's saw many Mennonites migrate to Saskatchewan in search of farm land. By 1901 there were numerous families living in the Dalmeny area. That year they organized a church with 49 charter members.

The congregation grew and by 1902 they dedicated their first building to the Lord. The congregation met on Sunday mornings for worship and then gathered together for the noon meal. The church grew considerably and by 1907 another building was constructed.

During the depression years the church lost members due to economic hardship. But, by 1945 the congregation had again outgrown its facilities and by 1950 the Dalmeny congregation, known then as the Ebenezer MB Church, was the largest MB church in Saskatchewan.

On June 30, 1968 another building project was completed. In the early 1980's the congregation, in seeking to reach out to its community, changed its name to Dalmeny Community Church.

Present membership is 139.

Pastor: John D. Reimer



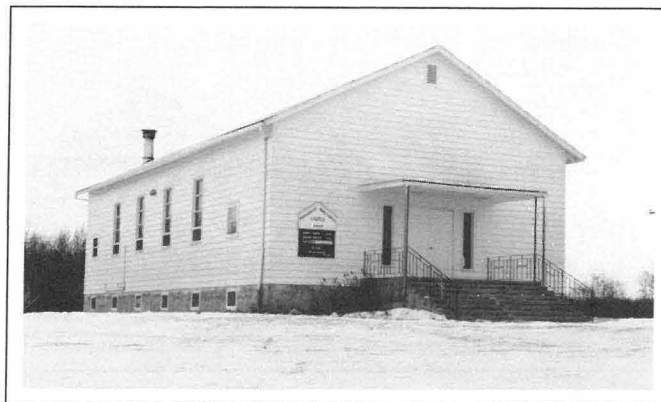
**Warman Mennonite Brethren Church**  
**208 Main Street West**  
**Warman, Saskatchewan**  
**S0K 4S0**

The Warman MB Church was begun through the mission efforts of the Saskatchewan MB conference, in 1932. In 1940 the congregation formally joined the MB conference.

Initially, services were held in the local town hall. A new location was purchased and a structure erected. This structure has been renovated three times. The initial structure had seating capacity for 100. The rapid growth of Warman as a bedroom community for Saskatoon, and the strong evangelistic outreach of the membership, increased the size of the congregation. The building, to accomodate this growth, has been expanded to seat 400. This final renovation took place in 1979.

Present membership is 168.

Pastor: Rudy Lemke



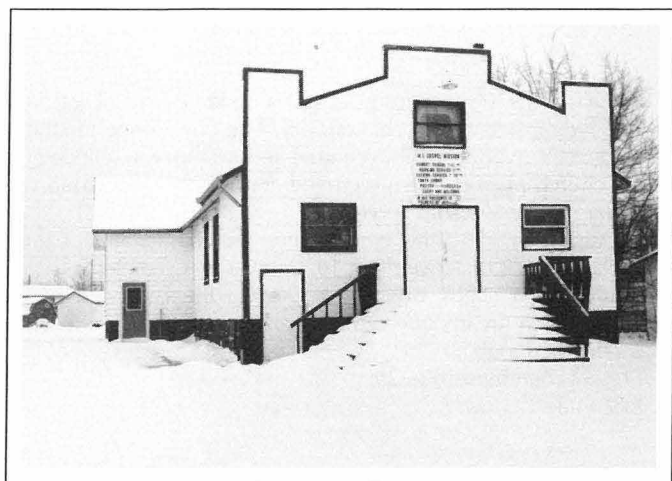
**Glenbush Mennonite Brethren Church**  
**Medstead, Saskatchewan**  
**S0M 1W0**

In 1927-28, 11 Mennonite families moved to the Glenbush area from Russia. The first church services were joint meetings with the General Conference group in the Avery School and later in a more centrally located church building in Glenbush which is still presently in use.

In 1928, an MB Church was organized and in 1930 a building was constructed. In 1933 and 1939 additions were built onto this structure. Then in 1963 a new building was constructed in Glenbush.

Present membership is 70.

Pastor: Victor J. Nickel



**Mennonite Brethren Gospel Mission**  
**Carrot River, Saskatchewan**  
**S0E 0L0**

In 1944 the Continental Interior Mission began the first evangelical work in Carrot River. A former rooming house was purchased on Main Street and a church ministry was established. The large auditorium set off from the street became known as the Gospel Mission.

The mission became interested in joining a conference and to becoming a self-supporting church. In 1957 they joined the MB conference and one year later they purchased a school building, moved it into town and this became the church. In 1963, with the congregation growing, an addition was added.

The congregation is composed of 11 different denominational backgrounds working together for the cause of Christ.

Present membership is 40.

Pastor: Herman Kroeker





**Hepburn Mennonite Brethren Church**  
Hepburn, Saskatchewan  
S0K 1Z0

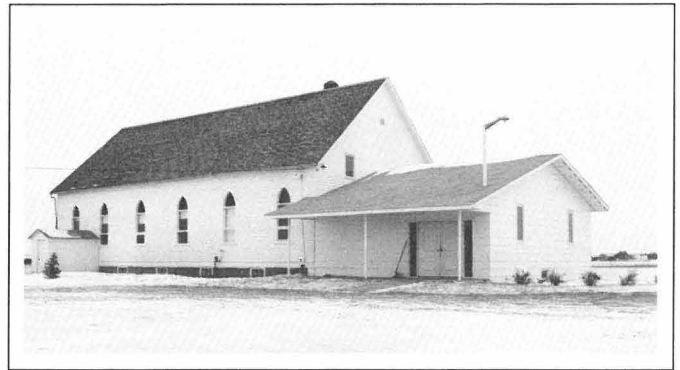
Mennonites first began moving to the Hepburn area from the United States. Since there was no MB church in the area they attended either the Dalmeny or Brotherfield churches. The difficulty of travelling these distances prompted the need to establish a church in Hepburn. On March 19, 1910 a group decided to ask the Dalmeny and Brotherfield churches to release their membership so that they could begin a church in Hepburn.

The group bought a lot and built a church. The first service was held August 21, 1910 and October 9, 1910 the building was dedicated. Since that time additions to the church have been made and in 1966 a new structure was constructed.

In 1927 the Bethany Bible Institute was founded in Hepburn. The first classes for the new Bible school were held in the church. Bethany Bible Institute has completed 61 years of instruction.

Present membership is 235.

Pastor: David Nachtigal



**Brotherfield Mennonite Brethren Church**  
Waldheim, Saskatchewan  
S0K 4R0

Prior to constructing a suitable building in which to worship, Russian Mennonite settlers in the Brotherfield area met in a grainary. A Sunday school, Bible study and an opportunity to sing drew the people together. In the fall of 1901, it was decided that a church building should be constructed and by the spring of 1902 the building was ready for use.

As people continued to move into the area, the church was gradually filled. In 1911 the building was so crowded that it was decided to begin construction on a new building. By July 1911 the new building was completed. In that same year the MB conference convened in Brotherfield, with delegates coming from Manitoba, Herbert and Rosthern districts. Through the years this church has maintained a vital ministry in northern Saskatchewan.

Present membership is 64.

Pastor: Reuben Andres



**Colonial Park Mennonite Brethren Church**  
3707-49th Avenue  
Lloydminster, Saskatchewan  
S9V 0R7

In the mid 1970's Lloydminster was a boom town. Oil was king and Lloydminster was the beneficiary. The conference identified it as a place where a Bible-centred fellowship was needed. In 1978 church planters were recruited and in 1979 the group was holding regular worship services.

In August of 1980 the congregation purchased a permanent church home. On November 16, 1980 the Colonial Park MB Church was officially organized. Despite the recession of the 1980's, which greatly affected the community, the congregation has remained viable.

Present membership is 25.

Pastor: Ted Haas



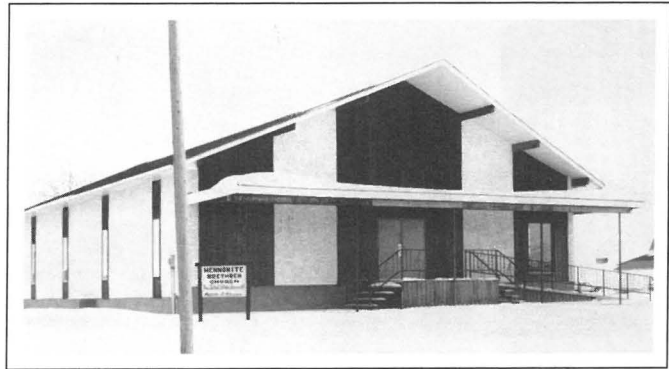
**North Battleford Mennonite Brethren Church**  
**1602-103rd Street**  
**North Battleford, Saskatchewan**  
**S9A 2X6**

In 1960 the Saskatchewan MB conference Board of Missions encouraged church planting efforts in North Battleford. Members of the board were urged to move to the town to help in the church planting venture. In that same year a group began meeting in an elementary school.

In 1963 the group officially organized with 12 members. And in 1965 the group began to build on property that had been purchased earlier in the 1960s. In late 1965 the attractive new facility was dedicated. By 1972 the congregation was able to become independent of conference funding. Although the congregation has never mushroomed from the small beginning, it has grown to considerable stability.

Present membership is 35.

Pastor: John I Block



**Meadow Lake Mennonite Brethren Church**  
**Meadow Lake, Saskatchewan**  
**S0M 1V0**

In the 1930's in the Meadow Lake area a mission church named Cock-on-the-North was an interdenominational group. The MB members decided to start their own congregation, which became known as the Compass MB Church. A few members moved away in 1957 and it was decided to move the congregation to Rapid View. At the time of this move a Baptist church disbanded and many of its members joined the MB congregation.

In 1961 the church moved to Meadow Lake where a church building was purchased from the Lutheran denomination.

In the fall of 1965 the group decided to construct a larger building, with the help of the Saskatchewan Home Missions Board. By 1968 the new structure was officially dedicated.

The congregation continued to grow and by 1978 plans began again for a building program. On September 14, 1980 the present church building was dedicated.

Present membership is 52.

Pastor: pastoral vacancy



**Pierceland Mennonite Brethren Church**  
**Pierceland, Saskatchewan**  
**S0M 2K0**

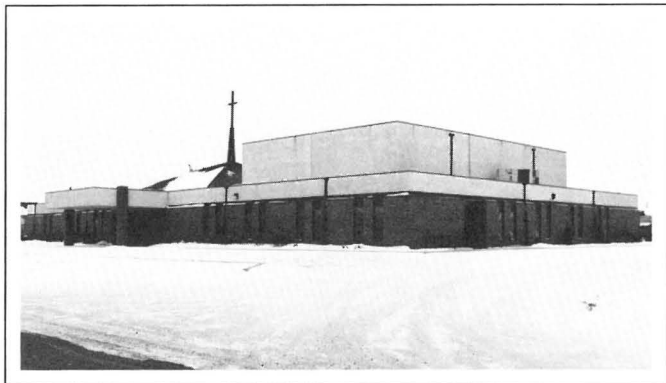
In early 1939, the first people to minister in the Pierceland area were from Bethany Bible Institute. These students visited homes and held Vacation Bible School. The first church building was constructed, by the new congregation, of squared logs.

In the early 1950's it was decided that a new building should be constructed. In 1954 the church members began gathering lumber from the bush. It took several years to accumulate enough to complete the building. When enough lumber was collected, the Canadian MB conference gave the congregation a loan for construction. The first services were held in the new church in September of 1960.

While the community is mainly composed of a transient population, many people over the years have been nurtured by this church.

Present membership is 6.

Pastor: Isaac Sawatzky



**Waldheim Mennonite Brethren Church**  
Waldheim, Saskatchewan  
S0K 4R0

Originally, the MBs living in the Waldheim area attended other MB churches in the area. But due to travel distance, it was decided to begin a new congregation. There was also an influx of immigrants from the United States which further stimulated the formation of a new church.

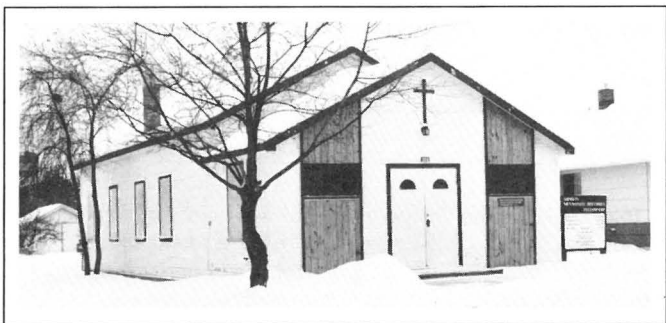
The group held its first service in an empty store building in 1919. A short while later, services were held in an old hotel.

In 1920 the congregation was able to construct its own building. It was during this time that the group received their charter from the Saskatchewan MB conference.

The congregation experienced two revivals, in the 1930's and 1940's, which stimulated the congregation greatly. In the early 1980's the church constructed the present facility which adequately meets the needs of this congregation.

Present membership is 156.

Pastor: John Block



**Nipawin Mennonite Brethren Church**  
306-1st Street West  
Nipawin, Saskatchewan  
S0E 1E0

In the early 1980's, a pastoral couple, through personal contacts and small group Bible studies (some even in the German language) began a fellowship. The small group held its first service in March of 1983 in a Junior High School. On February 10, 1985, the group held a chartering service where they became a member of the Saskatchewan MB Conference.

Presently the congregation is hoping for larger facilities. There is limited space for Sunday school.

Present membership is 17.

Pastor: Walter Balzer

**Restigouche Valley Church**  
Meeting at: W.I. Hall in Glen Levit  
Campbellton, New Brunswick  
E3N 3H4

This work had its origin in the arrival of two Christian families in the community in 1978 and 1979. Various Bible studies and coffee fellowships took place. Then, in 1983, the work received a boost when another two couples came to join the effort.

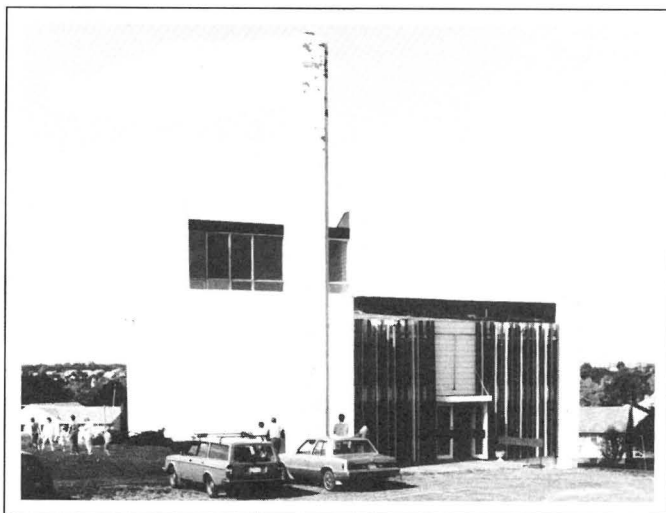
The fellowship's first baptism took place in 1984. Four people made public confessions of their faith and joined the church.

Since the beginning of 1984 the group has been holding regular Sunday morning services. The Bible study fellowships continue and are the mainstay of the fellowship. In December, 1984 the fellowship conducted its chartering service.

The Restigouche Valley church is situated in a bilingual area of Canada, straddling the New Brunswick-Quebec border. The community is comprised of francophone Acadians and anglophones of Scottish and Irish descent.

Present membership is 16.

Pastor: Siegfried G. Wall



**Cornerstone Community Church, Mennonite Brethren**  
86 Penhorn Drive  
Dartmouth, Nova Scotia  
B2W 3X8

In 1960 discussion began at the Canadian conference level to create a Christian service vehicle in the Maritimes. In 1967 the Dartmouth area was perceived as having the most acute shortage of churches.

In the fall of 1967 a group called the Mount Edward Bible Fellowship was established. In 1973 the congregation became a member of the Canadian conference. In May, 1976 the congregation dedicated a building, purchased from the Seventh Day Adventists with the help of the Board of Evangelism.

Membership grew under a new charismatic influence. As some members grew increasingly charismatic, while others remained more traditional, the group split apart. Membership declined rapidly.

Lately, the church-planting initiative has been rekindled and the small group anticipates new growth and stability.

Present membership is 22.

Pastor(s): Edward Unruh, Ed Willms (community outreach worker)



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